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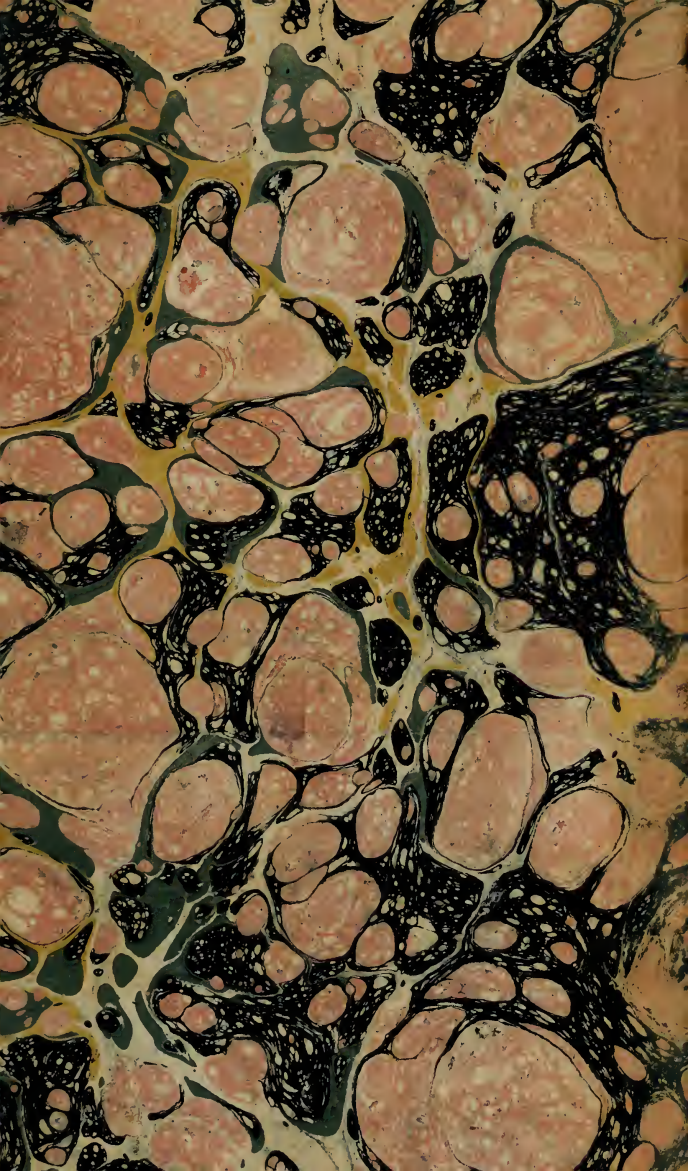
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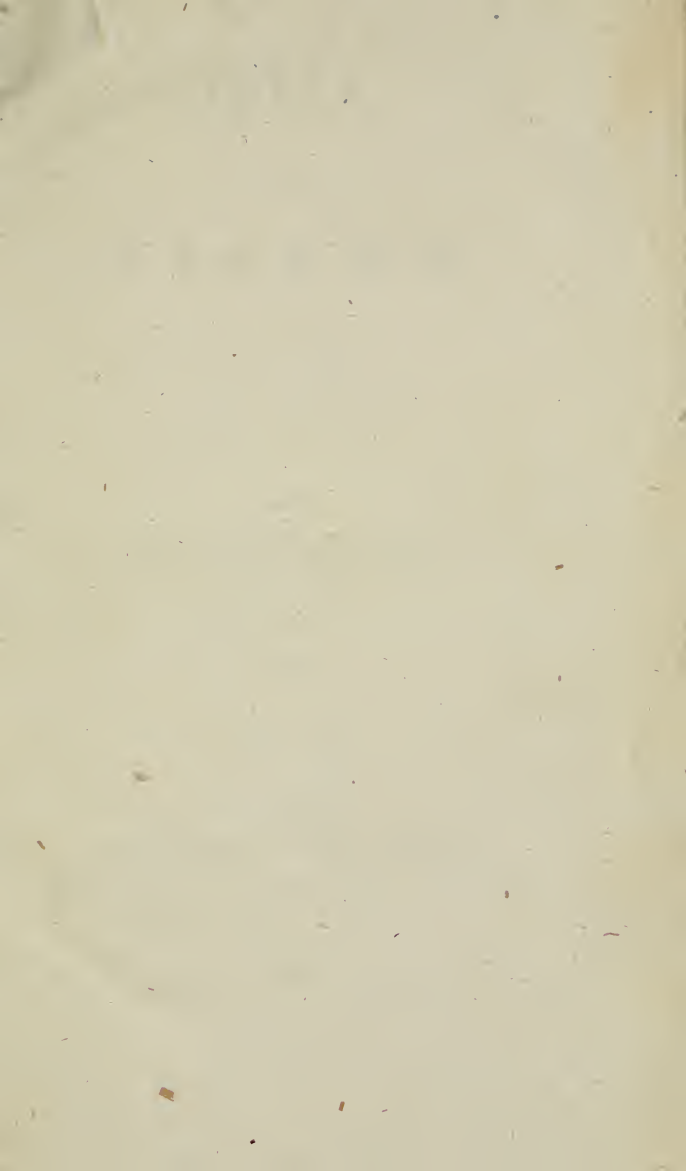
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JULIA
DE
V I E N N E.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

IMITATED FROM THE FRENCH.

BY A LADY.

VOL. IV.

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JULIA DE VIENNE.

WHEN De Montmorency awoke the next morning, he was far from experiencing that peace of mind and tranquillity he had flattered himself with the hope of.

The impressions of the preceding day were strongly engraven on his imagination, and he now wondered at his own forbearance in not having, when he saw Julia, overwhelmed her with the weight of his indignation.

He once more determined on revenge.

Not one of his plans was entirely satisfactory to him, and he was again forming new projects for torturing his wife and his friend, when a gentle sigh struck on his ear. He hastily opened his curtain, and perceived Julia asleep in an arm-chair close to his bed.

No words can express the surprise, or the pleasurable sensation, at that moment experienced by De Montmorency.

He could not withdraw his looks from his wife's countenance. Never had she appeared to him so interesting and lovely: her head was leaning against the back of the chair; her hands were clasped together, and indolently rested on her knees. Her closed eyes shewed to advantage the long dark eye-lashes, which gave additional brilliancy to her

clear complexion. A few light curls straying on her beautiful forehead were seen through the transparent lace of the night-cap, which was tied under her chin by a light blue ribbon, and the sweet smile of peace and innocence dwelt on her vermilion lips.

“Is it possible that she is guilty? Can such a perfect exterior cover a depraved heart?” thought the count; but soon the recollection of the letter he had read, and which was still in his possession, restored all his indignation, and he, in agony exclaimed—“No, no, she can never justify herself—wretched, undone, lost Julia!”

Julia at this moment opened her eyes, met her husband's looks, and ap-

peared frightened at their wild and threatening expression.

“ I hope you are better,” she gently said to him. “ My anxiety prevented me from sleeping during the early part of the night ; and uneasiness, lest you should be worse, brought me here. When I found you enjoying a peaceful sleep, I placed myself in this chair, fearful of disturbing you in retiring : fatigue overcame me, and I also have been slumbering.”

De Montmorency remained silent. Vexation, jealousy, and the involuntary sensation, excited by Julia’s artless manner, had re-produced all the perplexity he had suffered from on the preceding days.

“ You do not answer me, dear Frederic,” continued Julia. “ Ah ! I know the cause of your silence : you dread to confirm my apprehensions. Allow me to ring, and give orders for a physician to be instantly sent for, and in the mean time, do pray see the Chevalier de Courcy. He owned to us last night that he had considerable medical knowledge, and perhaps he may——”

“ You are too good, madam,” said the count, with irony, and interrupting Julia : “ you are, indeed, much too kind, and I receive, as I ought, this proof of your affection ; but allow me in return to decline the advantage of the Chevalier de Courcy’s superior talents. I feel myself infinitely better,

and I give you my word that you will never again see me so weak as I was yesterday.”

The count's valet, at this moment coming into the room, prevented Julia from expressing her extreme surprise at her husband's strange discourse; but a few minutes reflection convinced her that she ought to attribute it to his disordered health. She really believed him delirious, and her apprehensions increasing, she again entreated him to see a physician, which he positively refused; and greatly indeed distressed at the change in his countenance, which she still attributed to illness, Julia slowly retired to her own apartment.

The party at the usual hour assem-

bled in the breakfast-room. When De Montmorency came in, he threw himself into a chair, and answered the affectionate inquiries about his health with ill-tempered irritability. Julia, with sorrow and anxiety, attentively watched him; and in the hope of diverting his thoughts, she endeavoured to rally her own spirits, and appear cheerful. A tolerably animated conversation was soon established between her and De Courcy, in which the baron good humouredly mingled. He, however, shortly afterwards left them to dispatch some letters by the post. De Montmorency fell asleep, and Julia continued to discourse with the chevalier in a low voice.

“ The peculiar energy with which a passion, equally ardent and immutable, is described, could not, I think, fail to attract your attention,” said De Courcy.

“ It greatly affected me,” replied Julia.

De Montmorency moved in his chair, without, however, opening his eyes, and Julia continued :

“ Obstacles and persecutions must necessarily give additional strength to a sentiment, become, as it were, a part of our existence.”

Here Julia modulated her voice into a still lower tone : at which moment the rustling of a paper, which, as he thought, Julia was endeavouring to conceal, struck on De Montmorency’s

ear, and he opened his eyes at the instant when De Courcy was receiving a paper from the countess's hand.

“ I presume, madam,” exclaimed De Montmorency to his wife ; “ I presume that you will be gratified by the knowledge that a part of the sentimental correspondence between yourself and this gentleman has fallen into honourable hands. Here it is,” he added, darting a scornful look at Julia, and presenting to her the letter he had found in her writing-desk.

Excessive surprise for a few moments prevented Julia from articulating a single word. She soon, however, recovered herself: all her features became animated ; her eyes sparkled ; her cheeks were crimsoned ; the glow

of innocence suffused her bosom, and with all the majesty of insulted virtue she calmly said :

“ I thank you, sir, for having preserved this paper, which, as you have correctly observed, is ‘ part of a sentimental correspondence.’ It is a paragraph in a letter from Heloise to Abelard, which Pope has adorned with all the riches of his superlative genius. I have attempted to translate it into French, and if you wish to see the remainder of it, here it is,” she added, taking back the paper she had given to De Courcy.

A thunderbolt would have been more welcome to De Montmorency than were these last words. His knees shook under him, and he fell on a sofa, almost

unconscious of his existence. Confused, humiliated, unable to speak or move, his situation would have excited compassion in any other bosom than that of Julia, who, so far from being affected by his sufferings, haughtily retired to her room, without even deigning to address one word to him.

The chevalier felt for and pitied his friend. He made every effort, although in vain, to console him. De Montmorency answered only by ejaculations and tears.

“ I have too grossly insulted her,” at length, said the count; “ she will, she must hate me. And you also, my friend, what opinion must you have of the man who believed you capable of

——? No, no, she never can forgive me; both of you must despise me.”

Great part of the morning passed away, and still Julia did not appear. When the baron returned to the drawing-room, and learned what had occurred in his absence, he chided his nephew with all the impetuosity natural to his character:—

“Where is she? poor dear child! I will go and look for her. By all that is holy, sir, if she proposes a separation from you, I give you fair notice that I will assist her in it. Never, or may the devil take me, never would I have consented to your marrying her, if I could have foreseen how miserable you would render her life.”

“Go, uncle,” said De Montmorency, sorrowfully, “go, and unite with her in detesting me. I deserve my fate, and will never repine at the misery that henceforth awaits me.”

“Well, well,” said the baron, his eyes filling with tears; “do not vex yourself so much—you are repentant, you say, and that is quite proper—you need not be so very unhappy neither: we will see what can be done. But how, in the devil’s name, did you ever stuff into your head such absurd jealousy?”

De Montmorency replied by a deep sigh. The baron’s eyes were fixed on him; and the excessive paleness and dejection of the nephew, whom he had ever cherished with such sincere af-

fection, greatly afflicted the worthy old man. A tear rolled over his furrowed cheek; he wiped it off, but several others escaped from his eyes, and he said, attempting to smile :

“ I am not worth the devil when I take it into my head to scold that young man; I can’t help it, but I am as weak as a child. Frederic, my boy, get up your spirits—you really hurt me. She will forgive you. I will plead for you; I will talk reason to her, and if that won’t do, I shall get angry. When she sees you, she must ——”

A sob prevented him from continuing, and he hastily left the room in search of Julia.

In about half an hour the baron’s voice was heard in the hall.

“He is deeply afflicted,” he exclaimed, “I tell you he is in despair : come and judge for yourself.” Then pushing open the room door with violence, he dragged Julia up to the sofa on which her husband still laid. “My children !” he said, pressing them both to his heart ; “My dear children, kiss, and for ever love each other. Julia, why that pouting lip ? and you, sir,” he said to his nephew ; you look exactly like a fool ! Speak....Zounds, Frederic, can’t you speak ?”

“When grief and remorse is felt as acutely as by me at this moment, it is difficult to give utterance to our sensations,” said the count in a low voice.

“Well ! she forgives you,” ex-

claimed the baron, “ she told me so— is it not true Julia, that you promised me you would forgive him ?”

“ My forgiveness will be of very little use, sir,” replied Julia, sighing. “ Accustomed to indulge the most absurd and degrading suspicions of my integrity, can I hope that De Montmorency will ever correct himself of a weakness equally dishonourable to himself and me, and fatal to our happiness ? Dearest uncle ! this is not the first time that”

“ Very well, very well !” said the baron, interrupting Julia, “ but let us not investigate the quarrel any deeper ; ’tis the way to increase its intricacy, and make it last to eternity. In two words the case is just this : De Mont-

morency has played the fool, and repents of his folly from the very bottom of his heart. You, Julia....you forgive him, you forget it, and all is settled."

By this bluntness of manner, mingled alternately with sensibility and anger, the baron at length succeeded in reconciling the husband and wife. Julia promised never to refer to the unpleasant scene that had just occurred; and the count, really ashamed of the ridiculous part he had played, in the presence of De Courcy, swore everlastingly to banish from his mind every sentiment of jealousy: it must be acknowledged, however, that this last oath was not quite so easy to fulfil.

The Count de Montmorency when alone, reflected on all that had passed ; and self-love, that perfidious counsellor, whose imperious voice but too frequently suppresses the murmurs of conscience, soon persuaded him that his very errors had taken their source from the excess of his sensibility, and the result of this conviction was a perfect reconciliation with himself.— He recollected the cold and scornful manners of his wife, and her want of feeling in leaving him at the moment when his sufferings ought to have excited her tenderest compassion, repeated to himself with pride that he should have acted very differently, had he been placed in similar circumstances. In short, Julia's generous pardon appeared

in his eyes nothing more than mere condescension to the baron's entreaties, and no proof whatever of her affection for him.

Pensive and discontented, Julia on her side looked at De Montmorency's conduct with extreme displeasure.—More humiliated than affected by the explanation which proved the little knowledge her husband had of her character, she felt disgusted at his absurd jealousy, so mortifying to the feelings of a woman whose principles had not been contaminated by associating with the vicious of either her own or the other sex. She anticipated frequent repetitions of the late disgraceful scene, for she despaired of

ever seeing De Montmorency cured of this fatal passion.

This mutual recrimination which neither had candour enough to communicate to the other, insensibly produced a species of restraint and perplexity in their conversation extremely unpleasant to both. Julia's manners were cold and reserved. De Montmorency was absent, gloomy, and soon became ill-humoured and capricious. At length, wearied of himself, and of all that surrounded him, the count proposed their return to Paris, and was displeased with Julia for the readiness with which she acceded to his proposition.

The country had no longer any at-

tractions ; it was now near the end of November, and Julia, who expected in a few weeks to become a mother, anxiously wished herself again at the capital. She gave orders for their departure with a cheerfulness that increased the count's ill-humour, but she affected not to perceive it, and her brow remained unclouded until the baron informed her that he could not accompany her to Paris, having affairs of some importance to arrange at one of his estates. He however promised to be with her towards the end of December, the period when his beloved niece expected to be confined.

“ Oh, my father ! ” exclaimed Julia, her tears dropping on the worthy baron's hand, “ accustomed to your pre-

sence, to your kindnesses and indulgence, how shall I sustain this privation? but recollect," she added, affectionately pressing the hand she held in both of her's, "recollect 'tis you who are to name my child!"

The baron, greatly affected, repeated his promise, to accelerate by every possible means the period of their reunion, so ardently desired by all. The next day he left them, and early in the following week, Julia, her husband, and De Courcy, begun their journey to the metropolis.

Very little attentive to his wife's situation, De Montmorency had not at all studied either her comfort or convenience in travelling; and Julia, perceiving with surprise, that they were to

proceed post, and not by easy stages, could not refrain from shedding tears at this proof of her husband's indifference.

“ I thought, madam,” said the count, “ I should give you pleasure by hastening to Paris, as your eagerness to leave the country was very apparent. Indeed, I rather expected to receive your thanks for my attention to your wishes.”

Julia thought it best not to make any reply to this strange speech, and continued quietly to converse with De Courcy.

On arriving at Paris she was so much fatigued that she kept her room several days, and during her indisposition the Count only twice favoured her

with a visit, or inquired about her health. Julia, although wounded to the soul by his indifference, did not deign even to reproach him with unkindness. Indeed, she assumed so much carelessness of manner, that De Montmorency's heart became daily more and more alienated from his wife, whose affectation of levity so rapidly increased his disgust, that he soon began to dislike his home, and the society of the countess, and passed weeks together without appearing in his family.

The period for Julia's confinement was now fast approaching—of course, she seldom went out. The desire, however, of ascertaining that all the impressions to her disadvantage were

destroyed, induced her to leave her card at the houses of all those females who had heretofore acted towards her with such marked frigidity and reserve.

All of them returned her visit with studied punctuality; but Julia, who had expected to receive the most flattering attention, nay even apologies for having judged of her so unfavourably, observed in her visitors only cold politeness, and she soon became convinced that her parties were numerous and brilliantly attended, not from any wish to repair the injury her feelings had sustained, but because the society to be met with at her house was of the first description of rank and talent. "Alas!" thought Julia, "is

this the triumph I anticipated!--and had I obtained it, should I then be happy, when sorrows, a thousand times more acute than those which afflicted me a few months ago, now agonize my heart? Cruel, cruel Frederic, what have I done to occasion the loss of thy affection?"

It was thus in her hours of solitude, when deserted by her husband, that she commiserated her own fate—but scarcely did the count appear, ere vanity stifled the suggestions of affection, and she assumed towards him the most chilling and careless deportment.

Julia's imagination was nevertheless too active not to be incessantly forming visions of happiness—her sensibility, more ardent than profound, re-

quired some object towards which she could direct all her attention and affections. The idea of becoming a mother took possession of her thoughts, and a delightful perspective was delineated before her. "Soon," thought she, "I shall bring into the world a being who will love me, be grateful for my care, and return my caresses. I will exclusively devote myself to my child, whose welfare and happiness will be the sweetest reward for my unceasing maternal solicitude."

Julia, thus reflecting, impatiently anticipated the moment when she should press her infant to her heart; and this ardently wished-for period arrived, without bringing the baron to Paris, notwithstanding his solemn pro-

mise to give the first welcome to the little stranger.

The countess wished her lovely little girl to derive its nourishment from the most natural source—the bosom of its parent ; but this desire was overruled by her medical attendants, who feared a fashionable mother would make an improper nurse for a delicate infant, although to Julia they gave other reasons for opposing her intention.

De Montmorency, as usual, was absent from home at the interesting hour that made him a father ; and when he returned, the most profound sadness seemed imprinted on his countenance.

He hastened to Julia's apartment, and with a wildness of manner, that

alarmed the attendants, gave orders that no one was to be allowed access to the countess without his permission. He then gently opened the curtains of his wife's bed :—she slept, and he dared not disturb her rest ; but he took his little daughter in his arms, covered her with kisses, and bathed her lovely face with tears.

The countess's women, astonished at their master's melancholy, when every individual of his household was rejoicing at the safety of their beloved lady, remained at a respectful distance, not daring to interrogate him.

The count, after gently replacing his child on the arm of its still sleeping mother, told the nurse and other females to follow him into the next

room ; and there, in a voice almost stifled by his sobs, he informed them of the irreparable loss he had sustained. His uncle, his second father, the worthy and respectable baron, had been attacked by an inflammatory fever, which in five days terminated his existence. De Montmorency, almost convulsed with sorrow, then expressly commanded them sedulously to keep away every person likely to communicate this dreadful news to the countess ; and after once more pressing his infant to his heart, he retired to his own apartment, and gave himself up to his afflicting sensations.

The baron was adored by all De Montmorency's servants ; and his death

occasioned most unfeigned grief.— They all knew how infinitely the countess revered and loved this excellent man, and carefully guarded against the possibility of her learning the fatal event, until she was in a situation to be told of her irreparable misfortune, with less danger to her health than at the present moment.

The count was seldom absent from his wife's room, in whose presence he vainly endeavoured to assume the appearance of tranquillity. Julia, accustomed to the restraint and indifference which for some time had been evident on her husband's countenance, paid but little attention to his abstraction of mind; and only wondered at

his spending so much time in her society.

When his wife was sufficiently recovered to receive company, the count's visits became less frequent. He was still, however, attentive and kind, but he would shut himself up for hours together in his own apartment to deplore his irremediable loss.

Julia's incessant questions, and her surprise at the baron's protracted absence, agonized his heart: he had exhausted every possible pretext in order to lull her suspicions; but unable much longer to continue a deception so distressing to his feelings, he impatiently longed for the moment when he should be allowed to divide with

Julia the weight that oppressed his soul.

Three weeks had thus passed.—The countess, more interesting and lovely than before her confinement, was almost restored to perfect health. De Montmorency now determined to announce to her the dreadful intelligence, which he was aware would poison her tranquillity ; but each time that he intended to begin the subject, the heart-rending sentence “ he is no more,” expired on his lips. His eyes filled with tears, and he hurried from his wife’s apartment.

Julia at first imagined this strange conduct arose from the same disposition to caprice she had so frequently observed in her husband’s character.

Soon, however, most serious uneasiness took possession of her mind. One morning, when De Montmorency's countenance and manners were more than usually marked with sadness, and that, as was his frequent custom, at the moment he was about to speak, he had taken refuge in his own room, Julia resolved to follow and entreat him to communicate the cause of his excessive dejection and sorrow. On reaching his door, an involuntary agitation seized her—she was stopping to recover and calm herself, when deep sighs struck her ear, and in a moment after she heard her husband utter this exclamation: “ Oh ! my uncle ! my father ! What can ever console me for thy loss ! ”

“Great God!” exclaimed Julia, hurrying into the room, “what have I heard De Montmorency say?.... Oh! Frederic, tell me.... Is it true?” and she fell, nearly insensible, on a chair.

The count, kneeling at her feet, his head resting on her bosom, did not articulate a word. Tears and sobs were his only answer to the questions and exclamations of the really afflicted Julia.

Never was sorrow more poignant, or regret more sincere. Never was the loss of a beloved being so feelingly deplored. Julia was nearly overwhelmed by her sensations—she seemed inconsolable.

“Ah! I have lost all,” said she;

“unfortunate orphan ! Heaven bestowed on me a father, only to deprive me of him when I most require his protection. Yes, I have lost my only friend,” she added, clasping her hands together, and raising her lovely eyes, overflowing with tears to heaven.

The baron had made a will. De Montmorency was his general heir ; but he had left Julia an estate of twenty thousand livres a year, and the half of his personals. This additional proof of the worthy baron’s paternal regard greatly affected her ; she felt a sensation of pleasure at being thus rendered independent of her husband, whose disposition to jealousy gave her serious unhappiness.

A soft melancholy insensibly succeeded to Julia's grief, but society was still irksome to her, and she spent the greatest part of her time in the nursery with her little girl, to whom she had given the name of Isabella, taking pleasure in repeating it, and even in fancying she could discover in the delicate features of this new object of her affection a striking resemblance to her ill-fated aunt.

De Montmorency, already consoled, had resumed towards his wife the same appearance of coldness and reserve; and under the pretence that change of scene was necessary for his spirits, seldom spent two hours in the day at home.

The sedentary and monotonous life

to which Julia had condemned herself, very soon became insupportable. She in vain tried to persuade herself that maternal attachment could constitute her happiness. 'The child she loved could not understand her. It was yet insensible to the marks of her affection; and Julia, when loading it with caresses, was yet very far from thinking with an elegant poet—that it is more delightful to love than to be loved.

Sorrowful, discontented, and more, than ever convinced that reciprocal emotions and affections are necessary to happiness, regretting the past, disgusted with the present, and no longer daring to rely on an uncertain future, her thoughts vaguely wandered in the

sad chases, where hope only can enlighten the gloomy labyrinth. Julia listened to its voice, smiled at the new illusions it created in her soul, and already fancied them realised.

“ I have still friends,” thought she with enthusiasm, “ and yet I dare to complain of my lot.”

She recollected Madame de Viverais and the Chevalier de Courcy was softened by the affecting proofs they had both given her of their zeal and attachment, and determined to return their friendship with interest, whenever an opportunity presented itself of rendering either of them an essential service.

On looking over the list of those who had called during her confinement,

Julia observed that De Courcy had not omitted one day to make inquiries about her health. This attention excited her gratitude: she gave orders that in future he was to be excepted, when she was denied to visitors, and impatiently awaited the hour when he usually came; but that hour, and several others—in short, the entire evening, passed away, without bringing De Courcy; and Julia, both vexed and disappointed, retired to bed greatly out of humour. The next day she expected him, but with the same result; and she now concluded the chevalier was tired of paying her those attentions, which he must naturally think she was insensible to the kindness of.

A crowd of ideas, equally wearisome and unpleasant, now presented themselves to her mind, and caused her much unhappiness. Her husband's indifference, and almost total desertion, severely wounded her feelings. She would have given the world to have again found him kind, affectionate, such as he had heretofore been to her ; but the notion of the slightest advance on her part towards a reconciliation, or even an explanation, was revolting to her vanity, and although she accurately summed up her husband's errors, she carefully avoided the supposition that her own conduct was at least equally blameable.

Sleep forsook her eye-lids during the early part of the night, and a se-

vere head-ache succeeded the broken slumber she enjoyed towards the morning. The weather was delightful, and the air mild for the season. Julia resolved to try whether a drive in the *Champs Elysées* would remove the pain in her head. In crossing the *Rue St. Honoré*, some confusion amongst the carriages obliged her coachman to stop, at which moment an elegant landau was very nearly overturned, owing to the driver's anxiety to pass the countess's carriage. The screams of a female struck Julia's ear; she leaned forward, and perceived in the landau a beautiful young woman, indolently reclining on the shoulder of a man, whose features expressed the utmost solicitude. Julia could not restrain a

piercing shriek, on discovering her husband thus unequivocally circumstanced. Her looks were rivetted on De Montmorency and the young lady, who still remained in the same attitude. At length, bursts of laughter induced her to raise her eyes, when she observed Rosinval seated on the driving-seat of the landau.

De Montmorency at this moment turned his head, and cast a glance towards Julia, whom he had not before seen : surprise and shame were depicted on his countenance ; he was about to speak, but the confusion among the carriages having ceased, the landau at the moment drove rapidly away, and Julia, although she had lost sight of

her husband, still heard the insulting laughter of the hateful Rosinval.

Pale, motionless, and scarcely breathing, she could not instantly credit even the evidence of her senses. De Montmorency, faithless, had never once entered her thoughts.

“Is it possible!” said she, in a low voice, “is it possible he can love another!” The most agonizing sensations made her heart palpitate. “Yes,” she exclaimed, “from this moment I will despise him, and by contempt only will I punish his infidelity.”

Giving herself up to the most vehement resentment, her mind in that state when a thousand ideas succeed, cross, and perplex each other, Julia was un-

conscious that tears were rapidly flowing from her eyes ; and when her carriage stopped in the *Champs Elysées*, she remained still seated in the same attitude, without replying to her servant, who, having opened the door, requested to know her commands. Soon, however, the cessation in the motion of the carriage, the crowd of people walking under the trees, debating, laughing, and familiarly chatting, in some measure diverted her attention from herself, and she awoke, it may be said, from a frightful dream ; cast a less indefinite glance on the objects by which she was surrounded, left her carriage, and mingled with the apparently happy multitude, followed by her servant. In crossing the most fre-

quented walk, in order to reach a more private path, she perceived Madame de Viverais, accompanied by De Courcy, and leaning on the arm of another young man, to whose person Julia was a stranger.

The young countess was conversing with much energy : her animated gestures, and the expression of her countenance, led Julia to suppose her subject a very interesting one, and the attention of her companions confirmed the supposition. In a moment she raised her eyes, fixed them on Julia, and exclaimed with rapidity—

“ There she is....that is her.... Ah, Julia, how delighted I am to see you ! Allow me to introduce my husband, for whom I solicit your good opinion

and friendship. If you knew what I owe him, I am sure you would love him, my dear; it was he who emancipated me from my dismal prison; he knows my innocence; he never suspects me, and therefore I adore him," she said, making up a pretty prim face. Then, without giving Julia time to utter one word, she with the same volubility continued: "Well, my dear girl, so here you are at last, released from your abominable confinement.—How, in the name of heaven, were you able to endure it? I have been a week in Paris, and each day have determined to pay you a visit, but, in truth, I could not collect sufficient courage. I have seen so much of my dismal mother-in-law, that whatever is grave and

serious, infects me instantly with melancholy, and gives me a violent fit of the vapours. Besides, I heard you were in such excessive affliction for the loss of your old uncle.... By the bye, it is said he has left you all his fortune—I am delighted at it, and congratulate you from my heart; for had it been otherwise arranged, those riches too would have soon been squandered away by the magnificent Castelnau; for those creatures are ——”

A look from her husband prevented her from continuing. Julia took advantage of this chasm in the conversation to thank the countess for the kind interest she had taken in her happiness, and the proofs she had given her of her friendship, for which she assured

the countess she should for ever be grateful.

“ You see, sir,” said Madame de Viverais, interrupting Julia, and addressing her husband ; “ you see how she loves me—did I not tell you she was a divine creature ? ”

During this interval the Chevalier de Courcy had approached Julia, and with much sensibility expressed his happiness at again seeing her. He told her that the little journey he had taken with M. and Madame de Viverais had prevented his calling at her door for the last two days.

Almost stunned by Madame de Viverais’s incessant prattle, delighted at meeting the chevalier, her mind pre-possessed with the adventure of the

landau, and filled with curiosity to ascertain what the countess had meant when she spoke of the riches squandered away by the magnificent Castelnau, poor Julia seemed so agitated, absent, and unhappy, that the chevalier, as well as M. de Viverais, examined her with surprise. But she was so very lovely, her deep mourning gave to her face and figure so interesting an expression, that this scrutiny created also their extreme admiration. The gentlemen soon retired to a little distance, conversing together in a low voice, and Madame de Viverais then took one of Julia's hands, and drew it under her arm, exclaiming—

“Come, my dear, let us leave these gentlemen, and chat at our ease.”

“ Most willingly,” replied Julia.
“ Tell me, I entreat you, who is the
——”

“ Tell me, yourself,” said the countess, interrupting her, “ who the milliner is who made your cap, for I never saw any thing half so pretty.”

“ I will give you her address,” said Julia ; “ but in mercy tell me——”

“ Mind, Julia,” replied the countess, with quickness, “ I hate all compliments ; I never utter stupid things of that sort ; but I cannot help owning that you are a very lovely creature. Indeed, if my face was not of an exactly opposite style to your’s, I never should venture to be seen near you ; but you are dark, I am fair ; you have deep hazle eyes, and mine, you know,

are light blue; your complexion is
——”

“ Make no comparisons, my dear Alphonsine,” said Julia, interrupting her friend, “ they are all to your advantage, and I have not sufficient vanity to sustain the competition.”

“ That is ^{excellent} ~~gallant~~,” replied the countess, with an affected diffidence: “ you really think—do you indeed believe—at all events,” she added, with vivacity, “ the Castelnau can never stand a comparison with you. She has a frightful foot, a fat hand; her figure is coarse and inelegant, and such a bold look. They talk of the beauty of her complexion, but I am certain she uses white paint, like all those kind of creatures. For my part, I cannot con-

ceive how De Montmorency can possibly prefer her to you."

Julia blushed, turned pale, and in wishing to assume an appearance of calmness, became even more disconcerted and confused. She said, in a tremulous voice, to the countess:

"This celebrated Castelnau is very beautiful, if it is her I have just seen; but tell me, Alphonsine, is she married? Do you know her?"

"Indeed, my dear," replied Madame de Viverais, in a fit of laughter, "it must be acknowledged that your's are rather whimsical questions. In the first place, I am apt to believe that Madame Castelnau never fails to *marry* whenever she finds a man whose fortune or figure suits her convenience or

inclination. In answer to your other question, I only know her from having seen her dance at the opera; and if, since your return from the country, you had not been quite so enamoured of retirement, you also would have seen the fascinating Castelnau gracefully figuring away in the charming ballet of *Telemaque*."

"And does De Montmorency really prefer an opera-dancer to me?" said Julia, her eyes filling with tears.

"Oh fie, Julia!" exclaimed Madame de Viverais; "it is the most vulgar thing in nature to be jealous; and I must tell you, that a similar folly would seriously injure you in the world. So far from being jealous, you must, on the contrary, affect the most calm

and careless manner; as for myself, if such a circumstance was to occur to me, I should rejoice at it: I would ridicule my husband in all societies; I would caricature, and make epigrams on him and his dulcinea. I should shine, and be admired—he would be laughed at, and despised. Now would not all this be delightful?” added the countess, renewing her bursts of laughter.

“Oh, yes, very delightful,” repeated Julia, with absence of mind, and trying to force a smile. She then sank into a fit of musing, from which her lively friend’s volubility could not withdraw her. In a few minutes she complained of still suffering from a violent head-ache, and after taking

leave of the countess and her husband, threw herself into her carriage, without noticing De Courcy, who had presented his hand to assist her; and in a state of spirits only to be understood by those who have ascertained the infidelity of a beloved object, the wretched Julia returned to the home now become hateful to her.

All the tumult and confusion that vexation, rage, and jealousy, can produce in a naturally proud disposition, was now experienced by the unfortunate Countess de Montmorency. Deep sighs escaped from her tortured bosom, and broken sentences from her quivering lips. She alternately walked about her room, stopt, clasped her hands, raised her eyes towards heaven, as if

to implore fortitude ; then threw herself into a chair, covered her face with her handkerchief, and allowed her tears to flow.

“ Ah ! ” said she, “ at the moment I am thus afflicting myself, whilst my heart is suffering this most unbearable anguish, Frederic is probably at the feet of his profligate mistress ; perhaps he is now swearing to devote himself to her only, and for ever. Ah, no ! no ! he never did love me : a transient preference, created and strengthened by obstacles, was the only sentiment he felt for me, and that fascinating opera-dancer really possesses his heart. No ! ” she added, proudly dashing away the tears that fell on her agitated bosom, “ I will not endure this humili-

liation—this shameful indignity. Madame de Viverais was right, and I will follow her advice.”

Julia now rang for her attendants, placed herself at her toilet with a determination to select her dress and ornaments with more than usual care: the agitation of her spirits added much brilliancy to her always beautiful eyes, and gave to her whole countenance a most fascinating expression. She consulted the faithful glass, smiled at her own image reflected by it, and that very evening, affecting an air of gaiety and triumph, she visited at several houses, where the reception she met with realised the sensations of which she had before only ~~had~~ assumed the mask.

A young and lovely woman, deserted by her husband, is an object too interesting to be considered with indifference by the generality of men. All those who fancied they possessed powers to please (and vanity rendered the number very considerable) surrounded Julia, lavished on her the most flattering praise, solicited the favour of being admitted at her house, of attending her in her walks, at public places, and, in short, formed about her a little court, where, as an absolute sovereign, she dictated the laws, and governed by a smile of approbation, or a look of displeasure. This public homage, and servile adulation, caused to Julia that species of intoxication, frequently produced in the

minds of youth by gratified vanity ; but which fugitive sensation differs widely indeed from the pleasures arising from sentiment ; flattered, but not satisfied, she repelled reflection, and tried to fly from herself. De Montmorency's infidelity now scarcely retained a place in her recollection—contempt and indifference seemed to have superseded her affection for him ; still she dreaded thinking about him, and sedulously avoided a meeting.

When the attraction of a numerous and brilliant circle, nay, perhaps, the desire to watch his wife's conduct, induced the count to remain at home, Julia, cold, absent, and reserved, did not condescend to notice him ; indeed, she frequently appeared not to be aware

of his presence. On those occasions she assumed the most infatuating manners, and paid the most delicate, yet marked attention to several young men, who all seemed anxious to anticipate her wishes, and to receive a smile as the reward for their devotion to her will. Amongst these it was evident that the Chevalier de Courcy was the envied object of her preference.

De Montmorency looked on, reflected, but said nothing. If any one addressed him, he smiled with apparent vacuity of mind, and without replying, abruptly quitted the room.

It was at these periods he courted the society of the insinuating and treacherous Rosinval, whose hatred to Julia being now much more powerful than

his former affection, was anxiously awaiting the period, when a coldness between the husband and wife would give him the opportunity of wounding Julia's heart in the most tender part.

Mild, eager to oblige, and even attentive to De Montmorency, he sought every occasion to testify his friendship and the sincere interest he took in his welfare and happiness. He frequented those places where he was sure of meeting the count, and would often bestow the most exaggerated encomiums on Julia, and then, pretending to sigh deeply, he would add:—

“ How much, how very much it is to be lamented, that so perfect an exterior should be the only gift !”

He then stopped, and seemed to re-

pent of having allowed such an expression to escape his lips.

If De Montmorency did not notice this affectation of mystery, the artful Rosinval changed his plan. He spoke with acrimony of the coquetry of women, and of their duplicity; complained of being the dupe to one, who, under the mask of innocence and candour, concealed the most ambitious views; and who, pretending excessive affection, had, in fact, sacrificed her feelings to the most vile interested motives.

Rosinval, after observations like the preceding ones, gave De Montmorency a look, meaning to express feeling and compassion, then casting his eyes on the ground, became silent.

“ I hope it is not of my wife you are speaking,” said De Montmorency.

Rosinval still remained silent.

“ Sir,” exclaimed De Montmorency, “ you must explain these insinuations and half sentences. What is their tendency?—An honest man should never be ambiguous.”

“ De Montmorency,” said Rosinval, gravely, “ you are a little hasty ; but you have too much sense to be overcome by the candour you with so much propriety claim ; I shall therefore speak without disguise ; and at once ask you, if you can believe that a young creature, so poor as Miss D’Aubigny was, and so truly wretched in her aunt’s family (who each ^{hour} made her feel her dependant situation) could really marry you purely from affection ?”

De Montmorency was about to reply, but he reflected a moment, and casting down his eyes, remained silent.

“Why,” continued Rosinval, “did she at first give me the most flattering hopes, and encourage my attentions, if in fact her heart was devoted to you? What were her reasons for questioning me so closely about your fortune, the value of your estates, and your probable expectances?”

“Is it possible,” exclaimed De Montmorency, “that Julia could be so depraved as to——”

“She sought every occasion to converse with me alone,” continued Rosinval, without seeming to remark the count’s excessive unhappiness. “Aware of the invincible dominion her beauty

had acquired over my heart, she wished to maintain her power, calculating, that if obstacles, impossible to surmount, prevented her union with you, I should then be a last and honourable resource. Chance," added Rosinval, rather confused, "made me an involuntary witness of the disclosure of your sentiments for her; indeed, she told me on the same evening, with an artlessness of manner which I was foolish enough to be the dupe of, that she preferred you to me; but that, next to you, I was the man she would select from all the world. Her confidence in me, and reliance on my affection, the extent of which I am now convinced she took every advantage of, although at that time I believed her

quite a child of nature, greatly affected me; and such was the excess of my attachment, that the second place in her heart appeared to me a supreme good; besides, I indulged in the idea that your mother would never consent to your marrying a young creature so destitute of fortune, and consequently flattered myself that she would some day be mine. Whenever I was alone with her I ventured to express this hope; she heard me without displeasure, but always with infinite address led back the conversation to the particulars of your fortune, and your expectations from your mother and the baron. I will own to you that this excessive love of rank, and anxiety for riches, insensibly opened my eyes. I

now began to perceive a very unworthy motive for the curiosity I could never satiate; and when Madame de Seligny withdrew her niece from your attentions, my heart was but little affected by her absence. Indeed, my dear De Montmorency, the friendship I have ever had for you, would have induced me to break the promise I had given to the ambitious Julia; and I believe I should have betrayed her sentiments and intentions, if, on the very evening she was carried off, I had not received an express from one of my relations, requiring my immediate presence, and I was obliged to leave the castle without speaking to you."

Rosival thus concluded this false and treacherous recital, and still De

Montmorency remained in a fit of musing, totally unable to articulate a word. He called to mind Julia's mysterious conduct whilst at St. Louis, and her excessive confusion and agitation, whenever he spoke to her of Rosinval. He then recollected her affectionate expressions, and the artless manner in which she at first gave him her heart; and he could not believe her capable of such disgusting duplicity.

“Sir,” suddenly exclaimed the almost frantic De Montmorency, “where are the proofs, that, in the shameful story you have just related, you have strictly adhered to veracity?”

“I have none, sir,” replied Rosinval unmoved, “and in your existing state of doubt it is certainly better to

rely on your wife's candour, than on the word of a friend, who, however, can have no interest in deceiving you."

De Montmorency got up, and walked about the room in great agitation.

After having thus left him for some time to his own reflection, the traitor Rosinval, in a tone of affection, said to him :—

"Be assured, my dear friend, I respect, and acutely feel for your sorrow. Had I for one moment supposed Julia was still dear to you, I should have carefully guarded against the possibility of destroying the opinion you.."

"Unworthy girl!" said De Montmorency, with a calmness of manner which arose from mortification and

anger. "Ungrateful girl! but I no longer love her. Rosinval, is she not depraved?"

"Good God!" said Rosinval, looking at his watch, "it is very late, and I promised the divine Castelnau to sup with her to-night. Shall I introduce you there, dear Montmorency? She is a lovely creature; her conversation will divert your mind, and break the chain of your reflections. What do you say to it?"

"I no longer love her!" repeated De Montmorency; and not aware that he was going, allowed himself, with the same absence of mind, to be conducted to the carriage that was in waiting.

The elegant manners and accom-

plishments of the celebrated Castelnau, the numerous circle by which she was surrounded, together with the flattering reception she gave De Montmorency, dazzled his understanding, and flattered his vanity.

“ You will be greatly envied,” said Rosinval in a low voice ; “ two days ago Madame Castelnau retired from the protection of the Prince de D. : ~~who~~ is inconsolable ; she has not yet made a new election. You see how many there are here, who aspire to the happiness of pleasing her, and I am induced to think it is you she will honour with a preference.”

A sweet smile from the presiding goddess, whose eyes were rivetted on his countenance, completely intoxicated

De Montmorency. He drew near her, said a thousand *soft nothings*—supped with Castelnau—did not forget to take a sufficient quantity of the delectable wine ever to be found at the table of this fashionable idol; and finished by believing himself passionately in love, especially when he perceived several men equally distinguished by their birth and fortune, who could with difficulty conceal the vexation they experienced at having in vain solicited the favours she was now lavishing on the fortunate De Montmorency.

Very soon De Montmorency directed every thought and act of his life to the pleasure of pleasing his favourite. He presented her with the most magnificent jewels, furnished a

house for her in the most splendid style; delighted in anticipating her every wish, and in fulfilling her most unreasonable fancies with a boyish profusion.

Rosinval now triumphed: he was well acquainted with the delicacy of the count's mind, and was very sure he never would reproach Julia with her supposed depravity of sentiment and conduct. Yet the impression his villainous insinuations had made on the heart of the credulous De Montmorency, was, he was convinced, sufficiently strong to undermine his domestic felicity; and having thus destroyed all confidence between Julia and her husband, it now only remained to separate them entirely from each other.

Madame Castelnau assisted him to strike this last blow, and it has been seen how sensibly it affected Julia's heart.

She continued constantly to visit and receive Madame de Viverais, whose lively conversation, and never fluctuating spirits, had become necessary to her.

Relieved from the trouble of thinking, whilst in the society of the young countess, she consulted with, and followed her advice; not that she valued the opinions of this vain and frivolous woman, but because she required to be withdrawn from herself, and no one could guide, or rather drag, her through the vortex of the great

world so well as Madame de Viverais.

The Chevalier de Courcy rarely quitted the two friends. Ever full of life and spirits, he alternately delighted them by the playfulness of his wit, the poignancy of his satire, or the wisdom of his observations. Feeling, considerate, and obliging in his conduct towards Julia, he by an expressive look approved of whatever she said or did, carefully watched each sensation and impression that agitated her bosom, and instinctively shared in every sentiment of her heart.

His society had become necessary to Madame de Viverais. She was out of humour, and her spirits were de-

pressed if he failed to come at the expected hour ; but she never spoke of him to Julia.

Julia, on the contrary, delighted in praising him, unaffectedly expressed her pleasure at seeing him, and was astonished at the ill-humour with which, on such occasions, Madame de Viverais instantly changed the subject of conversation.

Insensibly this acidity of disposition so greatly encreased, that whims, and even incivility, succeeded to the affection she had hitherto shewn towards Julia. Still, by an unaccountable caprice, she never left her friend, visited her at all hours, sometimes indeed at indecorous ones, and seemed to take pleasure in surprising her at those mo-

ments when her presence was the least expected. On such occasions she would dart a scrutinizing glance around, and on the slightest pretence search into the most retired parts of the room; not seeming to be satisfied until she had finished this examination.

Julia, accustomed to her friend's eccentricities, at first paid but little attention to this strange conduct; but a marked continuance of it annoyed and offended her; and she did not try to conceal her displeasure from the young countess, who replied to her observations by sarcasms and ill-tempered illiberal allusions, which effectually destroyed Julia's comfort whilst in society with Madame de Viverais.

Having in vain endeavoured to extract from the incoherent expressions of her unaccountable friend the real motive for such extraordinary conduct, Julia felt infinitely desirous of a private conversation with De Courcy; but from the countess's unremitting vigilance, it became quite impossible for her to address the chevalier, except by vague expressions and broken sentences. Unfortunately these obstacles encreased her desire to see the chevalier alone.

One morning, feeling her spirits unusually depressed, discontented with herself, and every thing about her, but above all, anxious to avoid Madame de Viverais, Julia resolved to drive to the Bois de Boulogne, in the

hope that the open air and change of scene would alter the course of her reflections, and restore her mind to its usual tone.

The silence and tranquillity that reigned in this solitary spot reminded Julia of the walks she had taken at St. Louis, and of her excursions among the mountains in Bearn, when, accompanied by the affectionate and elegant Isabella, they together occupied themselves with anticipation of a delightful futurity.

“Dear and unfortunate friend,” thought Julia, “thou art no more.... and I....am I happy?” A deep sigh then escaped from her bosom, and her eyes filled with tears.

At this moment the noise of a car-

riage struck her ear, and she perceived through the trees a phaeton drawn by two beautiful English horses. De Montmorency, seated by Madame Castelnau, drove this elegant car; his countenance expressed his happiness. He cast one glance on Julia, but it conveyed only indifference, then gracefully managing the reins of his spirited steeds, he quickly disappeared in the cloud of dust raised by the velocity of his carriage wheels.

Leaning against a tree, her eyes fixed on the ground, Julia remained for some time nearly motionless. Her husband's unexpected presence had dried her tears, and broken the chain of her ideas. A heavy pain at her heart, and real grief, had superseded

the sensation of soft melancholy which the recollection of her beloved Isabella had excited in her soul.

Tired of her walk, and still more weary of a solitude that increased her pre-disposition to indulge in distressing retrospections, she was slowly returning to her carriage, when several voices in the road which De Montmorency had just taken, induced Julia to look round, when she observed some peasants leading the two beautiful horses she had a few minutes before seen her husband guide with so much ease and elegance. The excessive agitation of these fine animals, their bits covered with foam, and the resistance they opposed to the men who conducted them, greatly alarmed Julia. She flew to

the spot, and with a trembling voice asked where the phæton was, and what had become of She could not conclude the sentence, and pale as death she fell sinking to the earth.

One of the countrymen supported her in his arms, and as soon as he saw her colour return, said: “Madam, the phæton you inquire about is broken into a thousand pieces, and my comrade and me caught these pretty creatures, which we are taking back to Paris.”

“Great God!” exclaimed Julia, “what has happened to....”

“Oh, madam,” said the peasant, interrupting her, “the fine gentleman and the beautiful lady who were in the carriage have had a monstrous

fright ; they were both thrown out.... ah !—I dare say more than a hundred yards ; then the horses flew at a fine rate, smashed the carriage to pieces, and at last we caught them. I thought at first they were both dead ; the pretty lady is none the worse, but the gentleman is badly hurt I fear.”

Julia, scarcely able to breathe, said, “ Oh ! tell me where he is : where have they taken him to ? ”

“ Why, they have carried him to an inn, down there, close to Longchamp,” replied the peasant bluntly. “ I say, carried him ; for by my faith, he was whiter than a corpse, and neither stirred hand nor foot. I and François here were working in the vineyard, and we both ran as fast as our legs

would take us, when we heard the screams of the young lady, who cried, poor soul, like a Magdalen. Oh! it did me good to see her, bating the trouble she was in, for she does so love her husband. Oh! she is a fine lady.”

Julia sighed, and hastening to her carriage, gave orders to be driven with all possible speed to the inn described by the countryman.

A convulsive shivering agitated her limbs. De Montmorency wounded—perhaps dangerously so, was the mournful spectacle she must prepare herself to witness. How, she thought, would he endure her presence, and with whom should she find him.

These were the agonizing reflections that agitated her bosom during her

drive to the inn. On arriving there she got out of her carriage, and, supported by one of her people, entered the house.

“The persons you inquire for, madam,” said the master of the inn, “have this moment left this on their return to Paris. By good fortune a hackney coach happened to pass by, in which the lady placed the wounded gentleman, who had just recovered from his fainting fit. She supported him with all the pillows and cushions we could collect together ; so that he will scarcely feel the motion of the carriage, and I am convinced that this good arrangement, together with his dear lady’s anxiety for his comfort, will cause his removal to be as easy as if he had been conveyed in a litter.”

Julia once more sorrowfully got into her carriage, and returned to Paris. The hope of overtaking the deplorable object of her solicitude made her each moment look out at the window ; but whether De Montmorency's carriage had taken another road, or that he had stopped on the way, Julia reached the suburbs without having seen or heard of him. Not, however, doubting that her husband would return to his own house, she eagerly hastened home to prepare for his reception. On her arrival she sent for two eminent surgeons, and waited, with an agitation of mind not to be described, their opinion of the unfortunate De Montmorency.

Hour after hour passed, and still he

did not come. Julia, extremely uneasy, determined, notwithstanding her repugnance to any interference with such a woman, to send to Madame Castelnau's house ; and during the interval of her messenger's absence, she remained constantly at the window, attentively listening to the slightest noise.

After having thus spent half an hour, suffering all the misery of suspense and apprehension, she saw a carriage enter her court-yard, and knowing Madame de Viverais's livery, she hastily rang the bell, and gave orders to be denied to the countess.

" I will not be at home to any one," she added, " except the Chevalier de Courcy."

The servant had scarcely left her, when a loud noise was heard in the hall, and in a moment afterwards Madame de Viverais hurried into the room followed by the chevalier.

“I am indeed very sorry, madam,” said the countess, with both spleen and rage in her manner, “to occasion by my presence any interruption to your assignation with M. de Courey: he came to your door at the moment your servants were obeying an order of your’s, which did not extend to him; but, notwithstanding this pointed insult, I think it my duty to tell you, that you time your appointments badly, for perhaps you may not be aware that the Count de Montmorency is mortally wounded, owing to a fall out of his

carriage; and, now as the condolences in my power to offer might be considered troublesome, I will leave to this gentleman the care of reconciling ~~to~~ you^{to} this accident, and I have no doubt of his deriving much gratification from such an effort of friendship."

On concluding this speech, Madame de Viverais cast an ironical glance on De Courey, hastily left the room, not in the slightest degree attending to Julia, who entreated her to stop, and tell her where De Montmorency then was, and from whom she had received the account of the accident.

"Chevalier," exclaimed Julia, extremely disordered, "she is right—it is too true—my unfortunate husband

is wounded—but heaven in its mercy preserve me from the dreadful misfortune.... Cruel woman, how unfeelingly did she tell me he is mortally....”

Julia, unable to finish the sentence, melted into tears.

The chevalier, almost stupid with horror, remained a few minutes silent; but Julia's excessive grief soon restored his recollection, and he then requested an explanation of what he had just heard.

Julia told him of her having seen the phæton, and the particulars communicated to her by the peasant; also of her fruitless drive to the inn, from whence they had only a few minutes before her arrival conveyed De Montmorency. “Alas!” she added, “he is

without doubt at the house of her
he prefers to me!" and her tears en-
creased.

The chevalier seemed absorbed in
thought. "Fortunate De Montmo-
rency!" he at length said in a low
voice; "what would I not give to
excite such....madam," he added
more calmly, "what I have just heard
relieves in some degree my apprehen-
sions about the count, and above all, I
entreat you not to pay any attention to
the exaggerated account, so cruelly re-
lated by Madame de Viverais. You
know she is frivolous, giddy, and, I am
sorry to add, malicious and resentful;
besides, she has not seen De Montmo-
rency; and I need not, my dear ma-
dam, tell you, that an unpleasant

report is added to by every person who relates it."

Julia listened with absence of mind to the chevalier: he in vain tried to calm her uneasiness: at length the servant she had sent to Madame Castelnau's returned. Julia had not courage to interrogate him; De Courcy relieved her from this painful task, but the information he received was very unsatisfactory. No one had seen the count since the morning. Madame Castelnau herself, whom he had taken out in his carriage, was not yet returned home, and her people were ignorant of any intelligence concerning either of them.

The utmost agitation and alarm were now depicted on Julia's countenance;

she got up, walked about, then threw herself into a chair, repeating with an accent of terror and wretchedness:—

“What is become of him! Great God! what is become of him; where can he be? Chevalier, I will go—I will return to Longchamp, and stop at every house on my way there.”

She on saying these words rang the bell to order her horses.

“I entreat you, dearest madam,” replied De Courcy, “to calm yourself: allow me to make the necessary inquiries; and De Montmorency may come home; surely he will desire to be here, and I am certain you will see the propriety of remaining in your house to receive him. Rely on my zeal, my friendship, for your husband, and

devotion to——” he suddenly stopped, and then said :—“ I promise you not to return without information of De Montmorency.”

“ Go then, my dear chevalier,” exclaimed Julia ; “ take my carriage—kill my horses, if it is necessary, and oh ! do not allow me long to endure the agony of suspense.”

De Courcy was already at the bottom of the stairs : he jumped into the carriage, which set off at full speed.

After three hours of expectation, each minute of which seemed incalculably tedious, the chevalier returned, and exclaimed to Julia, who hastened to meet him :

“ I have found him ; he is well ;

that is, as well as is possible after a painful operation."

"But where is he?" said Julia, interrupting him. "Why has he not been brought here?"

De Courcy looked down, and remained silent.

"Chevalier," continued Julia, "do not keep me in this torture, but answer my questions."

"De Montmorency has broken his arm," replied De Courcy, "and has a contusion on his head: he suffered considerably from the motion of the carriage, and Madame Castelnau has taken him to a cottage she has at the entrance of the Bois de Boulogne."

"It is well," said Julia, turning pale: "he is with his mistress, and

without a doubt that woman's care will alleviate his sufferings, which my presence might perhaps have encreased."

A profound silence succeeded these words. De Courcy seemed pensive, and Julia could with difficulty restrain her tears; but endeavouring to assume a tranquillity she was far from experiencing, she entreated the chevalier to relate every particular concerning his visit to De Montmorency.

"When the servant you sent to Madame Castelnau's," replied the chevalier, "returned with the account of her and Frederic's absence, I recollected that she had a small house just out of the gates, to which I concluded she had conveyed him; of course, I instantly resolved to go there, and on

reaching the door, I observed a carriage draw up, which had preceded mine only two minutes—Rosinval got out of it. It was the first time I had seen that man since the ridiculous incident you are acquainted with. He gave me a hasty glance, and after an attentive examination of your carriage and people, he entered the house, of which the door was immediately closed. I knocked for a long time, wishing also to be admitted ; at length, a porter told me through a wicket that his mistress was not visible to any one.

“ It is not your mistress I want,” I replied, with, I fear, ill humour : ‘ I wish to see the Count de Montmorency, who is in this house.’

“ Sir,” replied the porter, ‘ I trust

you will excuse me, but I have peremptory orders to refuse admittance to every one, except the intimate friends of the family.'

"Well!" I exclaimed; 'go and tell De Montmorency that the Chevalier de Courcy wishes to speak to him, and if it is necessary, add, that I come from the countess, his wife.'

"The porter replied that he would obey me, and closed the wicket. Some minutes after he left me another servant opened the house-door, and silently conducted me to an apartment on the ground-floor, where I found De Montmorency laid on a chaise longue, supported by his two surgeons. His arm was set, and they were going to dress the wound on his head.

“ I am grateful, my dear Albert,” said he, in a feeble voice, ‘ for this attention ; I feel better, much better. These gentlemen,’ he added, pointing to the surgeons, ‘ have performed the painful operation I have just endured with infinite judgment, and I hope, success.’

“ -Dear Frederic !” I said, greatly affected ; for his extreme paleness, and resigned manner, excited all my compassion. De Montmorency held out the hand he had the use of, which I pressed between both of mine. We each remained some moments silent, during which interval the surgeons examined his head, and pronounced the contusion to be in no way dangerous.

“ Does Julia know of the accident

that has happened to me?' said the count.

"Yes, my dear friend," I replied, 'and 'tis at her request I am now here.'

"I suppose she disliked the trouble of coming herself?" he added, with asperity.

"I hastened to interrupt him," continued De Courcy, "and then informed him of every particular, madam, relative to your morning's walk, excessive anxiety, the little success that attended all your researches, and, in short, your determination to recommence them, when I offered to become your deputy; for my dear Montmorency," said I, in a low voice, 'concluding that you was here, I wished to spare the young countess the mortification of coming

to this house before I had ascertained whether it was possible for her to avoid the sight of a person whom your wife ought not to find performing those duties which it is her exclusive privilege to fulfil.'

"It is all very right, chevalier," replied De Montmorency, giving me a look that seemed rather extraordinary; 'you are a provident and very zealous friend; but I will trouble you to tell the countess that I beg she will not take the trouble of coming here. I hope to be conveyed home to-morrow night, and in the mean time she shall receive an hourly bulletin of the state of my health.'

"I was just going to make some rather severe observations on this strange

conversation," continued the chevalier, "but the presence of Madame Castelnau and Rosinval, who at that moment entered the room, condemned me to silence.

"A few minutes afterwards I took my leave of De Montmorency, who coldly bade me farewell, without expressing any wish for a repetition of my visit, and I left him, I will own to you, madam, much displeased with his manner."

"But he received his mistress with kindness, no doubt?" said Julia.

De Courcy remained silent.

"'Tis well," she added, with quickness: "he may rest assured that I will not annoy him with my presence, but will patiently wait, yes, indeed, very

patiently, until he condescends to accept of my attentions."

The chevalier now tried to give the conversation another turn, but Julia always led it back to De Montmorency, and with the affectation of carelessness and indifference, asked a thousand questions about her rival.

"That worthless Rosinval," she exclaimed, "will perhaps dare to insult me with his hateful presence even in my own house, and I must patiently endure the sight of a being I so infinitely detest, and who, I know, is my implacable enemy."

"I cannot comprehend," replied De Courcy, "what it is that so forcibly attracts De Montmorency to that despicable man."

“ Ah! my dear chevalier,” said Julia, interrupting him, “ how many points there are in the character and conduct of my poor Frederic that seem, and in fact are, incomprehensible! I thought I knew him, but I was mistaken, cruelly mistaken.”

Tears now escaped from her eyes, which she hastily wiped away, and then made an effort to assume the appearance of composure, but her varying colour, and suppressed sighs, too plainly shewed the anguish of her heart.

This painful struggle between anger, and the remains of affection for her husband, agitated her spirits, and seriously affected her health: she complained of a severe head-ache, and entreated the chevalier to leave her. He

obeyed, but his looks expressed so much sensibility, and he seemed so dejected when he took his leave, that Julia's soul was touched, and, notwithstanding her many causes of affliction, she experienced a pleasurable sensation from the knowledge that one being existed, who felt for, and participated in her sorrows.

“ Ah ! ” said she, sighing, “ I have still a friend—a sincere and invaluable friend, and I ought not to repine at my fate.”

De Montmorency punctually adhered to his promise, and constantly sent reports of his health to his wife. The last bulletin conveyed the distressing intelligence of the fever having materially increased, which rendered the

possibility of his removal uncertain. Julia, regardless of the count's prohibition, now determined to visit him, even in the house of his mistress; but at the moment she was stepping into her carriage, De Montmorency was brought into the court-yard in a sedan chair, attended by two servants.

Julia's first impulse was to fly to him, and make affectionate inquiries about his health, but her heart was chilled, by De Montmorency saying—

“ I perceive, madam, that although you expected me here, your carriage is in waiting to take you from home, and I beg my arrival may not prevent——”

“ You are right, sir,” said Julia, interrupting him; “ I was going....to Madame Castelnau's,” she added, in a tremulous voice.

De Montmorency looked at her with astonishment, and without uttering one word went to his own room, supported by the two servants who had accompanied him.

Julia remained a few minutes in the dining-room to recover herself from the agitation occasioned by her husband's unexpected return, and when she went to the count's apartment, a frigid indifference and a perfect calmness dwelt on her countenance.

This was the first moment in which they had been alone for nearly fifteen months, and the society of each other seemed equally to distress and embarrass them both. De Montmorency expressed an inclination for that rest so necessary in his very weak state ; and

Julia, eagerly replying that sleep would, more than medicine, contribute to his recovery, hastily rang for her husband's valet, and immediately left the room.

Six weeks thus passed, in a way truly unpleasant to Julia, who, whenever she visited the invalid, was accompanied by her little girl, whose presence in some measure obviated the restraint and awkwardness she always experienced, whenever she found herself alone with the count.

De Montmorency appeared to doat on little Isabella, and particularly delighted in hearing her first attempts to express her filial affection. The amiable disposition of this child already began to unfold itself: both her mind and features seemed to be formed on

the model of her interesting and unfortunate aunt.

Julia's eyes would frequently overflow, when the reflection obtruded itself, that she no longer possessed the affections of her child's father. How ardently, at such moments, did she wish to share those caresses lavished on her darling girl! but her pride revolted at the idea of an opera-dancer being preferred to her, and she endeavoured to steel her heart against every soft sensation.

Whenever Rosinval visited the count (which he regularly did every day) she instantly rose from her seat, took her child's hand, and with the dignity of insulted virtue left the room.

De Courcy never allowed one evening

to pass without seeing his friend, and each day encreased the good opinion Julia had ever entertained of him. She sometimes spoke to him of Madame de Viverais, whose visits had entirely ceased, but he always either changed the subject, or vaguely replied, that his cousin's eccentricities never surprised him.

One evening, when he at an earlier hour than usual called on his friend, the latter appeared grave, full of thought, and scarcely took any part in the conversation. Julia left the gentlemen for a few minutes, and De Montmorency's determined silence, and evident ill humour, at length induced the chevalier to say--

“ I cannot, my dear friend, any

longer forbear to express my unhappiness at the gravity and discontent so apparent on your countenance, and in your manners. Do you dislike my visits? or am I to suppose that your heart, which has so strangely emancipated itself from love, has also ceased to acknowledge the sacred rights of friendship?"

"It is rather singular," replied De Montmorency, "but the very reproaches you address to me are, in my opinion, applicable to yourself. Which of us is, at this moment, acting with the most duplicity towards the other? Heretofore, you had no concealments from me—now, 'tis from public report I learn that you have broken the silken fetters which bound you to your lovely

cousin, and that your heart and soul is devoted to another. This mystery to your friend is not kind, Albert."

Here De Montmorency fixed a penetrating look on De Courcy's face. The chevalier seemed confused, and still playing with the seals attached to his watch-chain, he replied with hesitation:—

"I am aware that my affair with Rosinval has allowed the world to suppose the existence of an intimate connexion between Madame de Vive-rais and myself; but, however flattered I may be by the preference with which my cousin has (sometimes very unguardedly) honoured me, I will give you my sacred word that no woman, so light, inconsistent, and capricious,

as is the Countess de Viverais, will ever find the way to my heart.

“The ridiculous observations she is weak enough now to make relative to my conduct, will entirely fail in their intended effect, and her absurd jealousy arises more from wounded vanity than from a sentiment which she is incapable of knowing the delicacy, and consequently the delight of.”

“Madame de Viverais and Julia,” said De Montmorency, “used to be sincerely attached to each other, and almost inseparable; and,” he added, smiling, “I never see her here now.”

“My dear fellow,” said the chevalier, hastily interrupting him, “I hope you do not expect me to be accountable for, or even to explain the causes of

all Madame de Viverais's whimsicalities?"

"De Courcy," replied the count, "I am pretty much of Madame de Sevigny's opinion: 'The public is neither mad nor unjust.' I perceive that rumour is correct as to part of your secret, and you must tell me the remainder. You know I am prudent, and may therefore very safely confide to me the name of your beloved, for I am aware that she must have more than common merits to attract your good opinion, and retain your exclusive devotion."

Julia at this moment entered the room; both the gentlemen changed colour, and seemed equally disconcerted.

Several visitors were now successively

announced. De Montmorency soon regained his usual tranquillity, and the chevalier hastily took his leave.

Julia, during her husband's confinement, had remained constantly at home, and had only admitted a few chosen friends; but as soon as the count became convalescent, she once more entered into the vortex of fashionable life. The rigid accuracy with which she had fulfilled her duty to her husband conciliated the esteem of all rational women, and excited, more than ever, the admiration of the men.—Adored, followed, and caressed, she endeavoured to persuade herself that she was at length happy; but she avoided solitude, for she still dreaded reflection.

One evening at the opera her lovely figure and elegant dress attracted general admiration ; but the celebrated Castelnau appeared on the stage—every eye was directed towards her, and the loud and reiterated applause announced that she alone would now fix the public attention. Julia, like all the rest of the audience, admired the elegant attitudes and inimitable graces of this infatuating woman, and De Montmorency's dereliction seemed almost pardonable. She took up her opera-glass, and directed her looks towards the pit, intending to ascertain whether his pride and happiness, at possessing such a woman, were depicted on his countenance, but the search was a vain one—De Montmorency was not there.

A few minutes afterwards a gentleman of her acquaintance came into her box.

“The celebrated Castelnau,” said he, “this evening tries to surpass herself: her uncommon exertion is I suppose occasioned by the presence of her illustrious lover, whom of course she wishes to captivate.”

“He is not here to-night,” replied Julia, who, not having paid any attention to the epithet of illustrious, merely supposed that he of course alluded to De Montmorency.

“Pardon me,” said the gentleman, “he is indeed here: the Landgrave of H. is in the box exactly opposite to your’s.”

“The Landgrave of H.” exclaimed

Julia with surprise, and raising her eyes towards the box her companion pointed out, perceived a man of about forty, dressed most magnificently, whose bosom was covered with stars, ribbons, crosses, and all the insignia of honours and nobility.

“ I did not think,” added Julia, with a smile of satisfaction, “ that this illustrious personage was Madame Castelnau’s lover.”

She now inquired into the particulars of this connexion, and learned that only on the preceding day had this goddess of fashion determined to accept the homage, and splendid settlements tendered by the enamoured Landgrave, to whom she had sacrificed another, less opulent lover.

Completely absorbed in her own reflections, Julia paid no attention to the scene before her, and the moment the ballet was concluded, she hastened home, entirely forgetful of a promise she had made to sup at a house where her presence formed the delight of the party.

“Is the count returned?” said she to the servants whom she saw in the hall.

“Yes madam,” replied her husband’s valet, “or, to speak more properly, my lord has not been out of his apartments to-day; and I have orders not to admit any person, excepting M. De Rosinval.”

Julia, without answering one word, lightly tripped up stairs, and passing through the drawing-room, flew to her

own bed-chamber: there she experienced a sensation impossible to describe; it was not joy, for deep sighs escaped from her bosom, but it was a species of comfort and ease, a degree of relief, in short, an anticipation of hope which she was fearful of indulging: still her mind incessantly reverted to the same subject, and she felt anxious to be alone.

After dismissing her attendants, she remained plunged in the most profound meditation. De Montmorency, grieved, unhappy, inconsolable, never once occurred to her imagination—but De Montmorency, greatly punished for his infidelity, anxious to throw himself at her feet, and entreat her forgiveness, and a return of her affection.

Such was the picture delineated by her wounded vanity ; she reserved all her compassion for herself, determined not to alter her manners towards her husband, or to advance one step towards a reconciliation, but to wait for his avowal of love and repentance.

It was in this disposition of mind that she the next morning went to the count's room, from whence, understanding he was gone down stairs, she immediately followed him into the parlour. She found her husband reclining on the sofa, his face covered by his hands, and his entire attitude expressive of the deepest dejection. Julia stopped to examine him, and at that moment felt a painful struggle between Pride and affection.

“ I hope you are not ill,” said she, approaching him. De Montmorency raised his head, started on perceiving his wife, and replied to her question by a negative motion of his head, after which they both for some time remained silent.

Accident so willed it, that they were exactly opposite the picture which De Montmorency had caused to be drawn, soon after his marriage, in which Julia was represented as wounding him with an arrow she had just taken from Cupid’s quiver. The count, after allowing his overflowing eyes to wander over every object in the room, at length fixed them on the picture: a deep tint instantly overspread his pale and sorrowful countenance; his respiration be-

came short, and rapid: he half turned himself towards his wife, laid his hand gently on her's, then hastily withdrawing it, said, in a scarcely audible voice, "Ah Julia, Julia!"

The countess continued silent. De Montmorency rivetted his eyes on her face, but perceiving only coldness and disdain, he started from his seat, walked about with evident uneasiness, and once more looking at Julia, hurried out of the room.

Thus vanished the dream which Julia in her vanity had with so much self-approbation indulged in; one word, one kind, feeling or affectionate expression, would in all probability have restored her husband's heart, but the pride, frigidity, and dis-

dain with which she received the first indication of his repentance and returning love, disgusted him, and alienated his heart still more from his once adored Julia.

Astonished and mortified at conduct she was very far from expecting, burning tears escaped from Julia's eyes.

“What!” she exclaimed, “must I sue for a return of his affection? Condescend to him, who has so grossly violated the most sacred duties, regardless of the wounds he inflicts on my feelings? Never, no never, will I debase myself by an act so opposite to my character and principles.”

De Montmorency confined himself for a few days to his own apartments,

where Julia never intruded ; she, however, regularly sent her child to visit its father, who after indulging in all the bitterness of affliction, at the expiration of one week, consoled himself for Madame Castelnau's infidelity, by taking a new mistress, on whom he lavished still more magnificent presents, and very soon gave himself entirely up to the pleasures which dissipation offers to such unfortunate beings, as are unacquainted with the refined and far superior enjoyments of sentiment. De Montmorency's extravagance was the universal topic in the fashionable world : every body wondered how his fortune could suffice to the extraordinary splendour and luxury of his new favourite's establishment.

Julia now became seriously uneasy. She feared, and with reason, that little Isabella would be the victim to her father's profligate folly, and she directed all her thoughts to the possibility of encreasing the fortune she possessed from the baron's generosity, and which was not at the disposal; or under the control of her husband.

“ It is my dear girl's only resource,” said she, one day to the Chevalier De Courcy; “and although Frederic is altogether regardless of the sacred duties imposed on him by nature, yet the dreadful reflection of having plunged his child into the misery consequent on poverty, shall never encrease the catalogue of evils which at some future day await him.”

De Courcy greatly approved of Julia's wise precautions. He carefully concealed his own anxiety, and endeavoured to lull her suspicions; but he knew that De Montmorency was devoted to cards and dice, and that he every night risked considerable sums at the gaming table. And he reflected, that although fortune had hitherto smiled on him, yet the fickle goddess might soon become weary of bestowing her favours, and plunge her votary into the most frightful abyss, from which neither his sincere repentance, or the ^{efforts} ~~effects~~ of friendship could extricate him.

These painful reflections added new strength to the melancholy which for some time had seemed to prey on De

Courcy's health and spirits. When in Julia's society he seldom spoke, unless to answer any observation of her's, yet his looks were always fixed on her countenance ; and if their eyes chanced to meet, he hastily turned away his head, sighed, and sank into the same state of mental abstraction.

Julia, affected by her friend's sadness, anxiously wished to ascertain its motive ; but she, from delicacy, refrained from questioning him, and patiently awaited his own explanation.

One day, in his eagerness to report the success of a commission she had entrusted to his management, relative to a poor family whom she protected, De Courcy entirely forgetting that Julia had appointed six o'clock as the

hour when she wished him to call, found himself at her gate exactly as the bell of a neighbouring convent was chiming the quarter after five. The countess was dressing, but the servants, accustomed to his frequent visits, introduced him into the dining-room, saying their lady would soon be with him.

De Courcy looked at his watch, perceived his mistake, and throwing himself on the sofa, sunk into the most profound reverie. But this total abstraction, this forgetfulness of surrounding objects, which perpetually occurs when the soul is strongly affected, rendered a long continuance in one spot altogether impossible. He left his seat, and walked pensively about the room.

A rose, which Julia had worn on the preceding day, was on the chimney-piece. De Courcy stood a long time looking at it—then seizing it with ecstasy, he covered it with kisses, and concealed it in his bosom.

“ Ah ! Julia,” said he in a low voice, “ too lovely Julia ! why, alas ! why art thou the wife of my friend ? ”

A slight noise close to him induced him to turn round. He saw Julia, and the most vivid carnation instantly overspread his countenance.

Julia, not less disconcerted, silently seated herself, whilst De Courcy, motionless as a statue, seemed struck as if by a thunder-bolt.

The countess sighed deeply, and then said, with a severity of manner,

and in a tone of voice that almost annihilated the chevalier:—

“I entreat you, sir, to excuse me, but I wish to be alone.”

“Ah, Julia!” exclaimed De Courcy, scarcely conscious of his existence, “Cruel Julia!.... Forgive me—In mercy, madam; in pity, let me speak to you. Do not condemn me unheard. Alas! if you knew the conflicts—Only hear me, Julia.”

“I have nothing more to hear,” replied Julia, in a hollow voice which shewed the anguish of her soul—“I have already heard too much. Ah! De Courcy!” she continued, her eyes filling with tears, “I am indeed unfortunate, for I must now renounce the esteem, [I may say attachment,

that has for so long a time been my only consolation, my only resource against evils, almost too great to be endured. Cruel fate has now bereft me of my only hope ; I have lost my friend, the friend on whom I relied, and to whom I looked up for advice, assistance, and protection. Alas ! I have not now one friend," she added, raising her eyes to heaven.

" Not a friend !" exclaimed the chevalier. " You, Julia—you, the object of my worship and veneration ! Ah ! never again utter such blasphemy, Yes, I love you ; I could not arm myself against the united beauties of your mind and person ; your misfortunes too, Julia ; your angel-like patience.. but heaven itself must approve a sen-

timent pure as that which——Will you only hear me, Julia?”

“De Courcy,” said the countess, “the line of rectitude is obviously marked out—we meet no more. This is the last time I will hear from the man I thought my friend language insulting to a woman he ought to respect; yes, respect for her misfortunes. In mercy retire; I repeat it is my wish to be alone.”

Inflexible to De Courcy's prayers and tears, Julia repeated her command to De Courcy never again to enter her house.

“Let us avoid each other,” she added, deeply sighing, “and do not reduce me to the painful necessity of being in future denied to you.”

“ Oh, God ! what will De Montmorency think ? ” said the chevalier, nearly distracted. “ Do you also condemn me never again to see the friend of my youth ? ”

“ It is so long,” replied Julia, her eyes full of tears, “ since there existed any affinity between Frederic and myself, that you may visit him without risking a meeting with me ; and if,” she added, in a tremulous voice, “ chance should bring us together in his presence, I shall not be ridiculous enough palpably to shun you.”

On finishing these words she rose from her seat. De Courcy, almost wild, took one of her hands, on which he rivetted his lips, then with an effort, that seemed the result of despe-

ration, he tore himself from her presence, and left the house he was prohibited from ever again entering.

Never had Julia's heart experienced a more acutely painful sensation. She seemed now alone in the universe: her eyes remained fixed on the door through which the chevalier had disappeared. She asked herself if it was indeed true, very true, that she should never again see the only being who had felt for, and soothed her misfortunes. "Oh friendship!" she sorrowfully exclaimed, "thou balm to misery! Hast thou been to me only a deceitful illusion? Must I indeed relinquish thy benefits and sweet consolations?"

She then reflected on De Courcy's

conduct, which the most rigid virtue could not condemn. He had never for one moment, during three years, in the slightest degree deviated from the most perfect respect and delicacy. Chance alone had revealed a sentiment which he secretly nourished in the centre of his heart. Julia, for one moment accused herself of severity, and repented of having, perhaps too lightly, sacrificed so estimable and feeling a friend. But she soon afterwards felt, that we ought never to temporise with our duties ; and that the only correct way of fulfilling them, is to fulfil them to their utmost extent ; and she, sighing, confirmed the sentence she had just pronounced.

Solitude having become more than

ever intolerable to Julia, she endeavoured to create in herself a taste for the different sciences; and soon was persuaded that she passionately loved both music and painting. She gave concerts at her house, became the zealous patroness of all artists, frequented the public libraries and picture galleries, collected at her parties all the men of genius and literature that the capital could produce, praised their works, encouraged their talents, and shortly acquired the reputation of being a woman equally distinguished for liberality of sentiment, an enlightened mind, elegant manners, and beautiful person.

De Montmorency almost entirely resided in the house of his favourite.

He every day gave magnificent entertainments, and his table was resorted to by all the idlers and gamblers of the court. Julia so rarely saw him, that they were become, as it were, strangers to each other. They now never met but in the public walks, or at the theatres; and then the difference of their associates generally prevented their parties from uniting.

Nearly a year passed thus. Julia began to accustom herself to the mode of life she had adopted. She was very far from being happy; but hurried on in the whirlwind of fashion, she had no time for reflection, and monotonously vegetated without either pain or pleasure.

It was now the end of the carnival,

and the masked balls at the opera-house were unusually splendid. Julia eagerly hastened to encrease the number of those votaries of folly and fashion, who expect to find in dissipation the phantom pleasure, which they are ever in pursuit of, but never attain.

The trite observation of 'I know you, do you know me?' wearied Julia's ears for nearly an hour. Accompanied by several of her acquaintance, she was slowly dragging her person through the crowd, elbowed, squeezed, and repulsed, occasionally answering the miserable attempts at wit of those masks who in passing addressed her, when a flower girl came close to her, and in a low voice said :

“ Poor Julia ! how I pity thee ; thy lover has not proved more faithful than thy husband ! poor forsaken Julia ! ”

Julia instantly discovered Madame de Viverais, but before she could reply to her malicious observation, the hand-maid of Flora had disappeared in the crowd. A few minutes afterwards a magician struck her on the shoulder with his wand. “ Thou hast in vain tried to escape from my power,” said he, in a threatening voice ; “ fate has yielded thee to me ; thy struggles to emancipate thyself from the magic circle by which I have surrounded thee will be abortive, for thou art my victim : tremble therefore ; Julia is not yet at the end of her miseries.”

The countess turned round with surprise and alarm ; she tried to discover who it could be that had so strangely addressed her ; but he had so carefully disguised his voice, that she could not distinguish him. Suddenly recollecting herself, she mentally ejaculated : “ Oh ! it can be no other than Rosinval.” The idea made her shudder, and she dreaded again meeting the odious magician.

Overcome by her agitation and the heat of the room, she felt anxious to sit down, and she requested the ladies of her society to again join her, when they in their turn became weary of walking about the room.

A mask in a white domino was near her, who after attentively examining

her, retired to a little distance, and remained leaning against a pillar. Julia's looks were vaguely wandering among the motley crowd, which was incessantly passing and repassing before her fatigued vision, when the name of De Montmorency, uttered by a mask seated near her, attracted all her attention. He wore a black domino, and was very energetically conversing with a person in the character of a cobbler, on the other side of him.

“ I assure you most seriously,” said he, “ that he is nearly ruined ; all his estates are mortgaged ; how then can you expect him to pay ? ”

“ Oh ! that is no affair of mine,” replied the cobbler, “ I have given him a week in which to satisfy me, and

at the expiration of that period I shall put an execution in his house."

"But, my dear viscount," exclaimed the black domino, "that is an abominable plan of your's, for you will alarm his other creditors, particularly Rosinval, who told me he was resolved to enforce his rights, and you will never get your money; besides, how can you expect that poor devil De Montmorency to find a hundred thousand livres in eight days?"

Julia stifled a scream of horror, and almost fainted; she wished to rise, but had not the power, and again sank down on her seat. The two masks, after conversing together for a few minutes longer in a low voice, left their places, and mingled in the crowd.

The white domino, who had been within hearing of this conversation, now moved towards the vacant seat near the countess, but as if irresolute, he again stopped, and remained silently observing the unfortunate Julia, whose countenance and attitude expressed the most overwhelming sorrow.

After she had endeavoured to ascertain the extent of the evil into which her imprudent husband had plunged himself and family, Julia made an effort to collect her resolution, and compose the turbulence of her sensations; she left her seat, and with tottering steps crossed the saloon, and reached the hall; she there ordered her servants to be called. It was now five o'clock, and the day began to

break. Some masks obstructed the different doors to which the carriages were to draw up. Julia in vain tried to reach her chariot. Repelled by the crowd, stunned by the discordant voices, noisy mirth, and buffoonery of the giddy throng, she was on the point of sinking under her fatigue and impatience, when the same white domino she had observed in the saloon approached, and clearing a passage, silently conducted her to the protection of her servants, remaining at the door until he saw the carriage drive off.

On reaching home Julia threw off her mask and domino, hastily put on a morning dress, sent for a hackney coach, ordered her servants to put on

plain cloaths, and attend her to the house of her solicitor.

Calculating only by her own impatience, and not recollecting that it was still very early, Julia was at M. le Blanc's door before seven o'clock, and of course had to wait for some time, until he could receive her. Quietly seated in the carriage, revolving in her mind the various conflicts she had experienced since her introduction into fashionable life, she frequently turned her looks towards the house from which she anxiously waited a summons to be admitted; and could not restrain an ejaculation of surprise on seeing De Courcy enter the gates. She let down the window to call him, but he had passed on so rapidly towards a

small wing belonging to the principal building, that she instantly lost sight of him. A minute afterwards a servant came to tell her the solicitor was at her orders, and she hastened to him.

“ Sir,” said she, greatly affected, “ chance has brought to my knowledge the dreadful state of my husband’s affairs ; I am well aware of the confidence he has ever placed in you ; tell me, therefore, I entreat you, if I am really to believe that the Count de Montmorency is on the eve of destruction.”

The solicitor appeared greatly perplexed, and for a few moments remained perfectly silent. At length he said :—

“ Although I ever disapproved, madam, of the count’s determination to withhold from you the knowledge of his situation, and the debts which overwhelm him, yet I dared not disobey his orders of absolute secrecy ; and this it is which prevented me from informing you of the count’s long standing pecuniary difficulties.”

“ But are there no means of repairing those difficulties ?” said Julia, turning pale.

“ I have exhausted every possible resource, madam,” replied M. le Blanc. “ Obligated to raise very considerable sums on the count’s estates, his creditors are going to restrain for the income. Fortunately, I have so arranged matters that these mortgages

do not entirely absorb the rents; but the debt is very considerable, and I ought not to conceal from you that your fortune is lost."

"From what you have just told me, sir," said Julia, in a tone of voice which shewed how acutely she felt her husband's misconduct, "I am induced to suppose you ignorant that the unfortunate Count de Montmorency is involved in still deeper miseries than those from which your efforts had extricated him. He has pledged himself to pay an hundred thousand livres in eight days; and if he fails, the creditor to whom he owes this sum, has determined to resort to those measures which will deprive me and his child of our home."

“An hundred thousand livres!” said the solicitor, with astonishment. “It is altogether impossible for the count to fulfil this engagement. In vain may I reflect, or use any further exertion, for I repeat, madam, every expedient is exhausted, and your husband is a ruined man.”

“No, sir, no,” exclaimed Julia, with enthusiasm, “her, whose fortune he has made; whom he raised from dependant misery to his own rank.—In short, his wife will avert from him the threatened ruin. I have brought you the titles, which, exclusively convey to me an income of twenty thousand livres a year. ’Tis a gift I hold from the generosity of my husband’s uncle. If necessary, sell this estate,

sir; you have my consent; which I shall, before I leave your house, give you in writing. I entreat you not to lose a moment in obtaining the sum De Montmorency has promised to pay in eight days. Here, also, are my diamonds," added Julia: "they are valued at five thousand louis. I trust you will not find it difficult to procure on these two securities the money we require."

M. le Blanc looked at Julia with surprise and feeling, and at length said: "But have you well reflected, madam, on the consequences of the act you are about to legalize?.... Your child will be the victim."

"My child!" repeated Julia, with emotion, and her eyes filled with tears.

“No matter,” she added, with more calmness, “I am resolved—but I require of you, sir, the most inviolable secrecy. My husband must remain in ignorance of the measures I have taken. This sacrifice must be for ever concealed from his knowledge.”

The worthy solicitor tried, but in vain, to alter the countess’s determination: she remained inflexible. They now calculated what resources would remain for the count and his family, after the sale of Julia’s estate; and the result of the strictest examination was, that if De Montmorency would submit to the most rigid economy for a few years, he would at the expiration of that period be emancipated from all his debts, and in pos-

session of his unencumbered estates. "With regard to your jewels, madam," said M. le Blanc, "it would be both improper and useless to sell them; but I will deposit them, as a pledge, with a man who resides in one of the wings of this house, who, I have no doubt, will advance on them nearly the whole amount of their value."

Julia, at this moment, recollected having seen De Courcy enter the building described by M. le Blanc. This circumstance forcibly struck her; but she dismissed it from her mind, and addressing the solicitor, said:—"Act in whatever way you deem most proper, sir: I commit the matter altogether to your judgment, requiring

only the most determined secrecy towards my husband, who would suffer too much from the knowledge of being indebted to me for his release from destruction. My present visit will be the more easily concealed, as, owing to my having always seen you at my own house, the gentlemen in your office are strangers to my person : and the precaution I took, of coming in a hired carriage, and my having ordered my servant to change his livery for plain clothes, precludes the possibility of my being recognized by your neighbours or inmates."

After having signed the deed, which for ever deprived Julia of all she possessed in the world, her heart felt relieved from a dreadful load. The ob-

jects which surrounded her appeared less gloomy and dismal ; but this view soon changed, when on coming out of the solicitor's door she perceived the odious Rosinval standing at the window of a house nearly opposite. He darted looks of curiosity into the hackney-coach, and smiled contemptuously on observing the countess in it.

The sight of the man she so much detested restored all her sadness. She recollected the magician at the opera ball, and the threats he had denounced, which the conversation between the two masks had but too clearly elucidated. " Great God !" she exclaimed, sighing. " This monster is De Montmorency's principal creditor. Ah !

he was indeed truthful.. I am not yet at the end of my miseries.”

Oppressed with fatigue and grief, Julia, on reaching home, threw herself on her bed ; but she in vain courted repose. If occasionally her heavy eye-lids excluded exterior objects, gigantic and threatening phantoms glided before her vision, and rendered this artificial rest more insupportable than positive wakefulness.

A little before the dinner hour, her daughter came to visit the countess. The sight of this beloved child cruelly tortured her heart : she took her in her arms, covered her with kisses, and melted into tears.

“ Mamma ! dearest mamma ! ” exclaimed the little Isabella, throwing

her arms round her mother's neck, "pray, pray don't cry. You will make me cry too. Look, pretty mamma, at this beautiful necklace papa has given me : oh ! he is such a dear, good papa ! and he does love his little Isabella so very...."

"Take her away," said Julia to the governess, in a voice almost stifled by her sobs. "Take her away : I cannot sustain her presence."

The remainder of the day seemed dreadfully long. Towards evening a packet of letters was brought to her : knowing the address of one to be the writing of her solicitor, she eagerly hastened to open it the first, and learned with the utmost satisfaction that he had obtained the hundred

thousand livres, which would very shortly be paid over to the Count de Montmorency.

Absorbed in the reflections naturally occasioned by M. de Blanc's communication, she held two other letters in her hand, of which she almost unconsciously broke the seals, vacantly looking at, without distinguishing them; but soon recovering her ideas, she more attentively examined them, and could not forbear uttering an exclamation of surprise. One of them was from De Montmorency, and the other from Madame de Vive-rais, enclosing a third, addressed to Rosinval.

Astonished at receiving a letter from her husband, Julia hastened to run

over its contents, when the violence of her sensation nearly deprived her of the power to finish reading it.

“ I have for a long time, madam,” said De Montmorency, in this letter, “ tolerated your excessive coquetry, and possibly my patience might have endured still longer, had you not, yourself, put the bounds to it by the indecency of your conduct. To encourage the addresses of every fashionable idler—to permit them publicly to express their devotion and homage, would of itself be considered a most culpable levity, but to have a clandestine assignation with one of your lovers, to spend part of the night together in the house of a third person, come out of it at seven o’clock in the morning, is

an act of more depravity and impudence than I ever could have suspected you guilty of.

“ A person, worthy of belief, has communicated to me this disgraceful circumstance, therefore it is useless to attempt a justification of your conduct: he saw you in your hired carriage, and he also saw the worthless object of your adulterous passion leave, on foot, half an hour after your departure, the place of his triumph, and your shame. Contempt stifles in my heart all feelings of resentment: he would have been my victim, had not my injured honour required a more ample atonement. Although immovable in my resolution, yet am I anxious on this occasion to avoid notoriety; I

therefore desire you, madam, instantly to retire to which ever of my estates you prefer. I except only St. Louis, which (having some affairs of importance to arrange) it is possible I may be obliged to visit, and it must be obvious to you, madam, that we never again can together inhabit the same house.

“ I shall take care to provide you with an income adequate to the necessities of life. You may, if you please, have the charge of your daughter until I judge it right to place her in more virtuous and respectable hands. Do not write to me; I shall not read any letter from you. It will be quite sufficient if you inform me verbally what place you have chosen for your resi-

dence, that I may be enabled to forward the necessary resources.

“ DE MONTMORENCY.”

A mist spread itself over Julia's vision; her unconnected and scattered ideas prevented her from (at first) comprehending all the horror of her position. She thought herself under the influence of an unpleasant dream; but that letter, that dreadful letter, which she still held in her trembling hands, soon recalled her distracted ideas.

“ This then is my recompense,” she exclaimed, with a bitter smile; then throwing the letter to a distance from her, she covered her face with both her hands, and remained almost annihilated.

Suddenly she arose from her seat—a vivid carnation overspread her face, and with an expression at once proud and disdainful, her eyes sparkling with animation, she exclaimed—

“At the moment I am sacrificing myself for him, he thus insults me; but no matter, I have done my duty: he does not know the heart or principle of his Julia.” She then added, sighing, “De Montmorency is right—we never again can together inhabit the same house: for how will he ever in future sustain the presence of his much injured wife?”

This contemptuous compassion which she felt for her husband aggrandised herself in her own eyes—an assumed tranquillity succeeded to her agitation,

and she resolved to give orders for her immediate departure.

How infinitely she now lamented her inability to refuse De Montmorency's insulting pecuniary offers ; but she was under the necessity of accepting them, and of thus crowning her painful sacrifice. She chose the castle of Font Romeu as the place of her exile, rang for a servant, and ordered him to take that answer to his master.

Madame de Viverais's letter still remained on the table. Julia, who had entirely forgotten it, now cast a glance on it, and was surprised at observing an inclosure for Rosinval, and her astonishment encreased on reading the following words contained in the countess's letter :

“ You know, Julia, that I was your friend, your very sincere friend ; and that when you was unhappy I supported your spirits, and defended your reputation. I ought not to have expected ingratitude ; but no matter, I have not one particle of rancour in my constitution, and therefore will not revert to old grievances ; for although you did most ungenerously rob me of De Courcy’s heart, yet when he abandoned you, I felt for and pitied you ; and it is long since my attachment to you has been revived to its original extent, though I never wish to see you, for I am sure if we were to meet there would be a dreadful scene between us, which I think it better to avoid ; but let us drop all this, and speak of a cir-

cumstance infinitely more interesting to you. I, yesterday, at the opera ball, by a most extraordinary accident, picked up the enclosed letter from your aunt, Madame de Seligny, to that abominable fright, Rosinval. I suppose the wretch must have dropt it out of his pocket. It contains a plot against you, which made me shudder, and I hasten to convey it to you, in order that you may unmask the monster to your deluded husband. Farewel, Julia. Be assured I did love you, and that I love you still, which you ought not to doubt after this last proof of the attachment and regard of your affectionate

ALPHONSINE DE VIVERAIS."

Julia at first felt a little repugnance

at reading the letter addressed to Rosinval, but the idea of the plot formed against her, spoken of by the countess so strongly excited her curiosity, as to overcome her delicacy.

The letter from Madame de Seligny to M. Rosinval, enclosed in the preceding one.

“ Naples, 2d March.

“ Courage, my dear friend ! Your conduct is a master-piece of ingenuity. How happily you have combined circumstances, and how divinely will events result from your plans. De Montmorency overwhelmed by debts — his wife lost in his esteem : yes, all this is as it should be ; but we must complete our work, and make these

two detestable beings dearly pay for the sorrow and disappointment they have occasioned to us both. Ah! my dear Rosinval, it is very true that revenge is the pleasure of the gods. Do not spare money—press sum after sum upon De Montmorency until his ruin is completed. You can draw on my banker, who has unlimited orders to answer any drafts of your's at the moment they are presented, and above all, bear in mind the instructions conveyed to you in my last letter. Farewel, my dear friend—I leave you, for I must fly to my daughter, who is a little unwell. I trust that in a few days she will present an heir to the illustrious house of Beauclerc. I shall not fail to communicate this happy

event to you, who will, I am certain, participate with me in the pleasure I shall experience at the birth of my grandson. Till when, and for ever, I am your sincere friend,

“ J. DE SELIGNY.”

Julia had exhausted every feeling which excessive grief, surprise, and indignation, can create in the mind of a human being, consequently this letter caused but a slight addition to the various agonizing sensations which agitated her soul. She was no stranger to Rosinval's treachery, and had never forgotten Madame de Seligny's unkindness to, nay, hatred of, her. She did not, therefore, require any new instances to strengthen her con-

viction of their depravity. Nevertheless, the idea that probably this letter would justify her in her husband's opinion, struck her for an instant; and she was about to send it to him, when a reflection occurred (the propriety and justice of which she was fully sensible of) and prevented her from acting on her first impulse. Circumstances were materially changed, De Montmorency was no longer the object of her ardent affections, but ought she for that reason to expose him to the same danger which she had heretofore shuddered at the mere apprehension of? Ought she to tear the veil from her husband's eyes, and unmask the monster, whose presence he

could never afterwards endure, until his blood had washed away his crimes?

“De Montmorency is no longer the being I idolize,” thought Julia, sighing, “but he is my husband, the father of my poor little Isabella.” This idea affected her, and she threw Madame de Seligny’s letter from her. But the fear lest this odious writing should at some future period fall into De Montmorency’s hands, made her soon take it up again, and she resolved to put it in a cover, addressed to Rosinval; which she did, after hastily writing these few words on a slip of paper, which she enclosed in the packet.

“ Enjoy without restraint, sir, that revenge which your accomplice calls ‘the pleasure of the gods.’ I despise you ; and will not condescend to make use of your letter. It is, however, right you should know that I am not the only person who has read it,

“ JULIA DE MONTMORENCY.”

After spending great part of the night in arranging her affairs, to accelerate the moment of her departure, Julia retired to rest, which the excess of her fatigue made her enjoy until twelve o’clock the next day. She was then told that the post horses which she had ordered were waiting in the court-yard. She eagerly hastened to finish some arrangements, indispensa-

ble under a similar change of residence, ordered one of her servants to deliver the packet of letters addressed to Rosinval, dismissed all her female servants, excepting only Isabella's governess, accompanied by whom, and her dear little girl, she got into the carriage, which was followed by one servant on horseback.

As the distance from Paris encreased, so did the painful weight which oppressed Julia's heart. The pride which until now supported her spirits, had yielded to the most profound sadness. The resentment she had experienced at the unjust accusations so grossly expressed in her husband's letter had vanished, and she almost wished she had convinced him of his

error. The idea was transient: and although she felt ruined, dishonoured, and alone in the world, yet the consciousness of having fulfilled her duty with heroism, consoled her even for the dreadful humiliations she was suffering, in being banished as a guilty and despicable woman, by the very man for whom she had made such serious sacrifices.

Not one friend was near to assuage her grief or dry her tears: the past offered only barren regrets: the future, absolute desertion and solitude. At the age of twenty-two, deprived of all the enjoyment of life, she was doomed to waste away her youth and beauty in a desert. Her sorrowful looks wandered over the passing ob-

jects, all of which brought back recollections, that poignantly encreased her affliction.

She had travelled the same road, adored by De Montmorency, when he was triumphantly conveying his beautiful bride to Paris, where she expected to find such unalloyed felicity. The picture of all she had suffered since that happy period was delineated on her imagination, but experience and not fallacy now guided the pencil, and the sombre, but truthful tints with which it darkened the colouring, drew more than one sigh from the agonized bosom of the unfortunate Julia.

She had continued her journey for seven days; and on the evening of

the eighth, whilst stopping in a village to change horses for the last time (being only one stage from Font Romeu) a beggar woman approached the carriage, entreating alms. She was supported by crutches: her face was wrapped up in a handkerchief, and the poor woman implored her charity and generosity in a weak and tremulous voice.

Julia put her head out of the carriage window to order her servant to give the beggar some money, but the latter on seeing the countess, uttered a dreadful scream, and immediately went away as quickly as her feeble legs would allow her.

“Great and ever just God!” she exclaimed sobbing.

Julia, greatly surprised, more attentively examined the woman, and recognizing Bridget, could not articulate one word. At length she recovered herself sufficiently to again call her servant. She gave him a louis, with orders to take it to the poor woman, and at the same time to make inquiries relative to this unfortunate creature's means of support. The servant soon returned, and said that the mendicant had fainted before he could reach her; but that on her recovery, she had bitterly wept on receiving the proof of the countess's benevolence.

“I asked many questions, madam, about this woman,” added the servant, “of the villagers who surrounded her;

and I learned that she was once very well to do, and in good circumstances ; but that ever since she was turned away from Font Romeu, where she was housekeeper, the most dreadful poverty and wretchedness has been her lot : and what is very singular, please your ladyship, nobody pities her ; they say she well deserves her fate, for her harshness and cruelty to a young lady, the sister of the count, who was entrusted to her care.”

Julia, not wishing to hear more, walked to the curate’s house, recommended the unfortunate Bridget to his protection, promised to pay an annual sum, sufficient to shelter her from the miseries of absolute poverty, and returned to her carriage, consoled by

the gratifying idea of having perhaps saved the life of a being on whom her own fate had heretofore depended, and who, for nearly five years, had in so dreadful a manner expiated her barbarity towards the lovely and ill-fated Isabella.

The setting sun darted its last rays on the ancient towers of Font Romeu, when the carriage passed over the bridge that led to the court-yard of the castle. Little Isabella slept soundly on her governess's knees; but the dismal noise occasioned by the rattling of iron chains, suspended in the moat, suddenly awoke her, and her terror was so excessive that she screamed dreadfully.

“Beloved child!” said Julia, much affected, “thy first entrance into this

melancholy abode is attended by the same sensations once experienced by thy unhappy mother, and it is with eyes bathed in tears that my dear girl distinguishes the place of her and my banishment."

Ximeo came to meet Julia the moment he perceived the carriage. Bertha was dead, and her son had succeeded her as keeper of the castle.

On entering the parlour, Julia found a pretty looking young woman, who respectfully curtsied to her.

"I have the honour to present my wife to your ladyship," said Ximeo, with an air of much satisfaction. "We have been four years united, and I am now more happy than during the first month after our marriage.

She has brought me two children, beautiful as angels. Go and fetch them, my dear Agnes: they must come and pay their duty to my lady and their young mistress."

Julia with much feeling contemplated this picture of conjugal affection: and the comparison she could not help making of their and her own situation, cruelly wounded her heart, and drew sighs from her bosom; but making an effort to appear more calm, she gave both Ximeo and his wife a gracious reception, caressed their children, and after giving directions to the governess to place her child in the bed-chamber next to the one she was to occupy, Julia hastened to the room where her beloved friend had respired

her last breath, and there gave herself up to her grief, fondly cherishing every tender recollection and sensation which pressed upon her heart.

On entering this solitary place, where her unfortunate friend had closed an existence blighted by sorrow, an involuntary shivering seized Julia; she stopped, cast timid, respectful looks around her, and for a long while examined the different objects once belonging to the much-lamented Isabella. Her guitar, still hanging in the same place, forcibly attracted her attention; almost all the strings were broken; two only remained. Julia drew near, placed her hand on it: the instrument returned a dull and tremulous sound, the vibration of

which seemed to extend over the room, and die away on the exact spot where Isabella had expended her last breath on the name of her adored Henry. Julia shuddered, attentively listened, and a crowd of melancholy recollections made her heart palpitate.

She slowly advanced towards the table, seated herself by it, her head supported by one of her hands. The excess of her emotion deprived her of the ability to reflect: she breathed with difficulty: the air which circulated around her seemed loaded with the painful sighs of the sainted Isabella. After having in vain tried to recover herself, she opened the window in the hope that fresh air might revive her spirits. The Castle of Florange,

partly concealed by the shades of twilight, met her looks, and, more than ever depressed, she returned to her seat. The table on which her arm rested contained Henry's letters. Julia opened one of the drawers, took out the papers which had so often rested on Isabella's heart, and examined them with much feeling and attention.

The fervent expressions of young De Florange's attachment, his delicacy, the ardour of his love, and extreme devotion to Isabella, exalted Julia's imagination, and she exclaimed with enthusiasm, " Ah ! this is real affection ! How I envy her fate ! She did not die without having known happiness." Then leading back her thoughts to De Montmorency, she compared him with

Henry. "Great God ! how different !" she added. Suddenly the papers she held escaped from her hands. Calmness and reflection succeeded her agitation : she drew her chair away from the table, and remained absorbed in thought. She had just compared De Montmorency to Henry ; but could she, on her part, sustain the slightest comparison with Isabella ? Had she ever felt that deeply rooted, imperious sentiment, that abnegation of self, and exclusive attraction to the beloved object ? that disgust and aversion to every person and thing, not belonging to him ? Would she have preferred De Montmorency to all the world ? In short, would she have died of grief at losing him ? Julia rigidly scruti-

nized her heart : she blushed, and in a hesitating voice said, “ Yes, I thought I loved ; but it was not thus I loved De Montmorency.”

The last delusive veil, which fallacy had permitted to remain over Julia’s eyes, and obscure her understanding, was now destroyed, and a species of stupor deprived her for some minutes of all consciousness of her existence.

When a little recovered from this mental torpidity, she endeavoured to look at her actual position in another point of view. For the first time in her life, silencing vanity and self-love, and listening only to justice, she felt that if instead of that unyielding inflexibility of character, which she had constantly shewn under all circumstan-

ces, she had submitted to her fate with gentleness and resignation, most probably her sweetness of disposition would have touched her husband's heart; perhaps he would not have given himself up to that dreadful life of dissipation which had occasioned his ruin, and she might now have been happy.

Julia sighed; she cast her eyes over the room, and she fancied the insensible objects by which she was surrounded became animated to reproach her with her impropriety.

“Isabella!” she exclaimed in her delirium, “oh, my beloved Isabella, it was here you heard me sacredly vow to render the object of my love happy. Alas! I have failed to do so: but on the same spot, receive once more my

solemn oath to repair my fault if ever Frederic and myself are re-united."

A cloud at this moment passing over the moon rendered the room dismally dark. The wind whistling through the casement, which had remained open, glided on the extended chords of Isabella's guitar; and, at the very moment when Julia was invoking the shade of her departed friend, the instrument murmured a vague and plaintive sound, which drew screams of terror from the half frantic Julia, who was hastening towards the door, when Ximeo entered, bringing in lights.

Julia's excessive paleness, and the alarm expressed on her countenance, greatly surprised the young man, and he respectfully said:—

“ I have ventured, madam, to disobey your commands by intruding before your ladyship rang the bell ; but it is late, the air is rather cold, and I thought that lights and a fire would not be improper in a room which has not been occupied for five years.”

Julia, ashamed of her weakness, endeavoured to assume the appearance of more calmness. She thanked Ximeo, ordered him to close the window, and after having respectfully replaced Henry's letters in the table drawer, she took out the key, left the room, and retired to her own apartment to seek that repose, the various emotions which for some time had agitated her soul, rendered so necessary.—But how vainly would she have courted sleep ;

how impossible would it have been to rest, had she known the events which had occurred since her departure from Paris.

De Montmorency, suffering all the agony of mind that a man on the very eve of destruction must necessarily experience, was nearly in despair. The hundred thousand livres, however, so unexpectedly brought to him by his solicitor, together with the protestations of the traitor Rosinval, not to press for the immense sums due to him, until perfectly convenient to the count to discharge the debt, insensibly calmed the excess of his misery; and if the dreadful recollection of Julia's dishonour had not torn his heart with all the indispensable tortures of jealousy, he might once more have become insen-

sible to the horrors of his actual position, and again have plunged into the destructive mode of life so disgraceful to himself, and calamitous to his family: but the tormenting idea of his wife's depravity perpetually recurred to his remembrance, and so harassed his mind, that he altogether avoided society, and, during this fit of misanthropy, employed himself in regulating the extreme disorder and confusion of his pecuniary concerns.

It will naturally be supposed, from the impetuosity of his character, that De Montmorency's first impulse was to send a challenge to the Chevalier de Courcy; but this supposition would be erroneous, for the idea of the ridicule which this affair would bring

upon himself, together with his repugnance to publishing his wife's dishonour, restrained him, and he resolved to revenge himself on Julia only, whom he determined to make his victim, and immolate to his just resentment by condemning her to perpetual banishment.

The day following the one on which Julia had left Paris, the count returned to the house which he had not for so long a time inhabited, for the purpose of taking an inventory of such part of the furniture as he could immediately turn into money. He had resolved to let his house, and himself reside in the one he had presented to his mistress. After he had looked through every room, he stopped in that belong-

ing to Julia, with the intention of setting aside such of the articles of luxury with which it was adorned, as he could dispose of to the most advantage. He had nearly finished his researches, when, wishing to remove a superb time-piece which stood on the chimney-piece, he perceived a packet of letters addressed to Rosinval.

Extremely surprised at seeing Julia's hand-writing on the cover of a letter directed to Rosinval, and not at all comprehending a circumstance that seemed to him so unaccountable and mysterious, De Montmorency examined the letter, which he still held in his hand, then looked at the seal, which he knew to be his wife's, and was altogether so perplexed, as almost to doubt

the evidence of his senses ; at length the sensation of curiosity, which he could neither control nor govern, impelled him to break it open, at the same time exclaiming :—

“ False, deceitful, worthless woman! this is no doubt intended to excite the compassion of my friend, and solicit his interference to obtain from me a revocation of the decree which has reduced her to despair, but I will be inflexible.”

Scarcely had his rage extorted this exclamation from the unhappy De Montmorency, when he glanced his eyes over the contents of the letter—the paper fell from his hands; a violent palpitation at his heart impeded his respiration ; his knees shook, and he

was obliged to support himself against the chimney-piece; whilst in an apparent stupor, with his looks directed towards the ground, his eyes seemed to be fixed on that part of Madame de Seligny's letter, in which she says:—

“ Do not spare money: press sum after sum upon De Montmorency, until his ruin is completed.”

A dreadful explosion succeeded to this temporary annihilation: it seemed as if the soul of De Montmorency had collected all its strength, which was now evaporating in one furious burst of passion.

Anxious instantaneously to reach the treacherous Rosival, he rang the bell with violence to order his horses, and almost struck the servant, whom he

thought did not come quick enough to receive his commands.

This man was the very person to whom Julia had entrusted the letter for Rosinval. The moment he observed it in his master's hands, supposing that the excessive rage to which he had nearly been the victim could only arise from his having neglected to execute the countess's orders, he fell on his knees, entreating De Montmorency to pardon him.

"I am the more guilty, sir," said he with tears in his eyes, "because my lady had strictly commanded me to deliver the letter to M. Rosinval on the very day of her departure ; but having had a great deal to do in the house, I placed it behind the time-piece, intend-

ing to take it when I had finished my work, and unfortunately it altogether escaped my memory, until this dreadful moment."

De Montmorency, without replying one word to his servant's confession, ordered him instantly to have the horses put to his carriage, then flying to the library, he took his pistols, and was going down to hurry his servants, when crossing the hall he saw De Courcy, who, wrapped up in a large cloak, was walking quickly towards the dining-room.

This unexpected meeting; a crowd of recollections; and the various sensations they excited in his mind, gave to De Montmorency's countenance a gloomy, savage, and menacing expres-

sion, which certainly would not have escaped the chevalier's observation, had he been less intent on the business which brought him to his friend's house.

"De Montmorency," said he, "grant me a moment; I must say a few words to you alone."

The count cast a wild and sullen look around him, mechanically placed his hand on his pistols, and returned to the library accompanied by De Courcy.

"My dear Frederic," said De Courcy, throwing off his cloak, and placing two bags full of gold upon the table, "chance has brought to my knowledge your present pecuniary difficulties, and I am come to offer this sum, in the hope that it will assist you to remedy the existing evil."

De Montmorency's hand still rested on his pistols; he withdrew it shuddering, then threw himself into an arm chair, and seemed almost annihilated.

“Why are you thus afflicted, Frederic?” added De Courcy greatly affected. “What causes this dejection? Did you suppose the companion of your childhood, your friend, would allow you to be inconvenienced? Was you not sure he would fly to your assistance? Be of good heart; your circumstances are not desperate; I have seen your solicitor, and we have together made some arrangements which will save your fortune, and that of the lovely woman who wished to sacrifice herself for you.”

The count cast a stern glance on

De Courcy, then turning away his head, he exclaimed:—

“No, I cannot believe it; it is an atrocious calumny. De Courcy,” he added, with a mixture of sensibility and wildness in his manner, “tell me if it is true: yes, I claim it of you to tell me if....if indeed Julia made an assignation with you at a house in *** street? if she left it at seven o’clock in the morning? and if you——”

De Montmorency could not finish the sentence: his distress and confusion prevented his going on, and by looks only did he entreat his friend’s answer.

“Great God! what do I hear,” replied De Courcy, in a hollow voice. “What! at the moment when the estimable Julia was divesting herself

of all she possessed in the world—at the moment she was carrying her jewels to your solicitor, and the deeds which conveyed the fortune your uncle left to her—at the very moment, when with overflowing eyes, she entreated him to sell this estate and those diamonds, and with the produce relieve you from the oppression of your creditors; at that moment you believed.... yes, you believed this most infernal calumny.”

De Montmorency clasped his hands together, raised his eyes towards heaven, and the paleness of death overspread his countenance.

“It is time,” gravely continued the chevalier, not deigning to notice the count’s dejection. “It is time the un-

veiled truth should be placed before you : my respect and submission to the wishes of the respectable woman you have so greatly injured now yields to the imperious necessity of rendering a splendid testimony of her innocence. It becomes my duty also to express to you my esteem for, and admiration of, her superior virtues : I will go to her, and entreat her permission to unmask to you the monster in whom you have placed such unlimited confidence."

On saying this, the chevalier rose and went towards the door.

"Stop, Albert!" said De Montmorency, nearly frantic. "Julia is no longer in this house—I have banished—cruelly banished her—and at Font Romeu you will——"

A deep sigh, or rather a groan, stifled his voice, and he cast down his eyes, to avoid meeting the looks of his friend.

An ejaculation of surprise and indignation escaped the chevalier; he remained a few moments silent, then approaching the count, he said with a good deal of sternness in his manner:—

“Listen to me, De Montmorency, and heaven grant that the knowledge of your injustice and barbarity to your unfortunate wife may not rend your heart with the most bitter remorse, and may you forgive yourself, as readily as will the angel whom you have so cruelly insulted.” De Courcy now recapitulated every particular re-

lative to the origin of Rosinval's enmity to Julia : he described her alarm and anxious care to bury in her own bosom a secret, which might occasion the most fatal consequences to her husband, had he resented the conduct of the treacherous and depraved Rosinval. Then with the candour of an exalted mind, he confessed his attachment to Julia, described to his friend his various sensations, and the many struggles he had had with his feelings : spoke then of the silence he had imposed on himself for three years, and at length related the circumstance which had betrayed his secret, and with enthusiasm dwelt on Julia's candid and sublime conduct on an occasion so truly distressing. " From that fatal day," con-

tinued the chevalier, with emotion, “ respecting the orders I had received, I entirely ceased to see her, whose melancholy fate nevertheless still continued to occupy all my thoughts. I several times attempted to speak to you about her: and you know with what cold determination the subject was always changed: I therefore resolved to wait until time had opened your eyes, and that the very excess of dissipation to which you had given yourself so entirely up, brought you back to that lovely being, the object of your culpable indifference. I little thought you was then on the brink of ruin; I learned the dreadful truth, at the same moment with the unfortunate Julia, and the cruel blow she then

received rebounded on my heart. The indiscretion of two masks, your creditors, who repeatedly uttered your name, excited Julia's attention, although at some distance from her: I was also within hearing of this conversation: I was a witness to her misery, and saw her, as soon as she could collect sufficient courage, leave the saloon. How did I then execrate the guilty exclamation that had discovered to her a sentiment which I wished should undiscovered have descended with me to the tomb. I could not now fly to her, condole with her, or offer the soothing interference of a friend; and I was doomed to the torture of seeing her, for whose happiness I would willingly sacrifice my

existence, absorbed in affliction, the excess and bitterness of which I was prohibited from attempting to alleviate. I followed her at a distance, until I saw her safely in her carriage; and I then quitted a spot become insupportable to me. Frederic," continued De Courcy, with dignity, "I equally despise that vain ostentation, with which we fulfil our duties, and that false delicacy, which frequently induces us to bury in silence actions whose sole motive is almost always our own gratification; I will therefore candidly state what I have done for you. I, a few days ago, received some bills of exchange to the amount of eighty thousand livres; I resolved to offer you this money; it is my share of my mo-

ther's fortune—hear all I have to say,” continued the chevalier, seeing De Montmorency about to interrupt him. “I request it in the name of friendship and justice. I am going to Malta, there to take my vows, and remain as long as the order may require my services. This sum is you will thus perceive at present useless to me, and I entreat you to accept of it, until your pecuniary affairs are regulated; I mean your estates freed from encumbrances. When I learned into whose hands you had fallen, and that Rosinval was determined to pursue you with rigour, I was grateful to heaven for giving me the power to parry the threatened blow. My bills were payable two months hence; but, as I knew your

necessity for money at a much earlier period, I resolved to discount the notes, and for that purpose immediately went to a man well known in these kind of negociations, who lives in the same house with your solicitor."

Here De Montmorency again heaved a deep sigh.

"On entering the court-yard," continued the chevalier, "I observed a hackney-coach, but I paid very little attention to the circumstance. My thoughts were all directed towards your unfortunate position and Julia's sorrows; and I was far indeed from supposing that interesting woman was then so near me. I conversed for some time with the honest usurer, whose expectations appeared to me rather im-

moderate, and having at length brought him to more reasonable arrangements, he told me that on the day after the following one, I might receive the amount of my bills. I was about to retire, when your solicitor entered the room ; he held a jewel box open in his hand, which he hastily closed on perceiving me ; but not, however, in time enough to prevent my recognizing your wife's diamonds. Guessing a part of the truth, it was impossible to resist the desire I had to learn more particulars as to her wishes and intentions.

“ ‘Those are beautiful jewels, sir ;’ said I, approaching the solicitor.

“ ‘Yes !’ replied he coldly.

“ ‘Are they to be sold ?’ I continued.

“ ‘No !’ replied he, ‘we wish to bor-

row fifteen hundred louis on this pledge.'

"Let us look at them," exclaimed the usurer. 'Let us look at them: these diamonds are tolerably fine, but fifteen hundred louis is a very large sum, a very large sum indeed; and I doubt whether you will very readily raise it on things of this sort; besides, you are come too late; I have just promised this gentleman,' he continued, pointing to me, 'to let him have eighty thousand livres the day after to-morrow, and I have no more disposable funds at this moment.'

"M. Le Blanc seemed much disappointed, and was leaving the room, when I went up to him, and in a low voice said that I wished for two minutes conversation with him.

“ Mistaking me, I have no doubt, for one of the *usurious fraternity*, and supposing I coveted the diamonds, he told me rather drily to follow him, which I hastened to obey. When we were in his office, I threw off my great coat—Le Blanc then perceived my cross, and had difficulty in persuading himself (as he has since told me) that a knight of Malta could follow the profession of an usurer. It will be useless,” added De Courcy, “ to enter into the particulars of the conversation we had together ; suffice it to say, that Le Blanc, when he knew me to be your friend, and that I intended to hand you a sum which would shelter you from every inconvenience, informed me of your wife’s visit, the affecting

sacrifice she had made of her entire fortune, and of the secrecy she had required towards yourself. We agreed not to sell her estate, but to raise on that and on her jewels the hundred thousand livres you required ; and we, from calculations, convinced ourselves that this sum, together with the money I should have the happiness to obtain for you, would satisfy your principal creditors, and enable you to make such arrangements with the others as would completely save your property ; but in order to accomplish this, you must resolve, my dear friend, to live for some years with the most rigid economy, and I am convinced that your honour, justice, and the duty you owe to your wife and child, will

render this necessity an imperious law."

The chevalier had finished his recital, and still De Montmorency remained in the same state of silent apathy: his eyes were cast down, his respiration convulsive—sometimes he lifted up his hands, and clasped them together over his forehead; then letting them languidly drop on his knees, he resumed his first melancholy attitude. After remaining for some time in this position, he suddenly started from his seat, and giving the chevalier a look, which well expressed the anguish of his soul, he walked slowly towards the door.

"Where are you going?" said De Courcy.

“To Rosinval,” calmly replied the count, shewing the pistols he held in his hand.

“Almighty God, forbid!” exclaimed the almost distracted chevalier: “Frederic! I entreat, I implore you Unfortunate, ill-fated Julia, what will become of her, if.... and ’tis I—I am the cause of this.... De Montmorency, my earliest, my dearest friend, in mercy to your wife and child, moderate your just indignation! Let contempt alone be his punishment of.... publicly unmask the villain, Rosinval, but do not commit yourself ——”

“He shall die!” said De Montmorency, interrupting the chevalier with fury: “he shall die, or he shall rid me of an existence he has rendered a

burthen to me!" And finishing this sentence, he tore himself from De Courcy, who wished to retain him, crossed the hall with the swiftness of lightning, and jumped into his carriage, which drove off at full speed.

"My dear friend," said the treacherous Rosinval, when De Montmorency entered his house, "I was just going to you, being anxious to congratulate you on the noble firmness of your conduct towards your unworthy wife."

"Monster!" exclaimed the count, in a voice like thunder, and throwing Madame de Seligny's and Julia's letters in Rosinval's face, "read these, and instantly follow me."

Rosinval turned pale, picked up the

letters, coolly put them in his pocket, and casting an ironical glance on De Montmorency's countenance, said, in a voice, which he endeavoured to render firm—

“ This high-flown rage mightily becomes the husband of the *virtuous*, the *immaculate* Julia ——”

An insulting look from De Montmorency prevented him continuing this aggravating speech, and they then with equal fury darted out of the house, and as rapidly as the horses could convey them drove to the fortress near the gate of St. Antoine.

There, getting out of the carriage, they withdrew to a retired spot, and began a combat, the issue of which it was determined should be death to one of them.

De Montmorency fired first, and the ball whizzing past Rosinval's ear, struck a tree nearly behind him.

Rosinval, more fortunate, grazed his adversary's shoulder ; but as neither of these shots had answered the purposes intended by those who directed them, the now deadly enemies threw aside their pistols, and each drew his sword. Repeatedly wounded by each other, they both still continued to fight with determined fury. At length, exhausted by loss of blood, they sank to the earth together. De Montmorency's sword was thrust up to the hilt in Rosinval's breast at the moment when the latter's weapon was buried in the side of his enemy.

De Courcy, nearly distracted about

his friend, whom he knew to be intent on revenge, had, the moment after the count had torn himself away, ordered a horse to be saddled, which he immediately mounted, intending to follow De Montmorency, and prevent the fatal consequences of a meeting between him and Rosinval. He reached the house of the latter gentleman a few moments after the adversaries had left it. The servants were unable to give him any satisfactory intelligence, as they were wholly ignorant of the road they had taken; and he was on the point of giving up the attempt of finding De Montmorency as a hopeless one, when a Savoyard girl, who was sitting on the steps of Rosinval's house, perceiving his anxiety, told him the

gentleman had given orders to be driven to the fortress near St. Antoine's gate.

. De Courcy instantly galloped to the spot, where he found the unfortunate count bathed in blood, and the paleness of death spread over Rosinval's disfigured countenance.

Overcome with grief, he threw himself on the ground by his friend. He soon, however, tried to apply a coarse dressing to his wounds, whilst De Montmorency's coachman performed the same service to the inanimate Rosinval: he then called aloud for help, when several persons walking on the fort immediately came to his assistance, and they carried both the wounded combatants to the nearest house.

Whilst on the way, Rosinval reco-

vered from his fainting fit, and on seeing De Montmorency (who was still insensible) seemed anxious to speak, but the blood, which poured in large quantities out of his mouth, prevented his utterance, and one could only collect vague and unintelligible sounds. The chevalier was in the deepest affliction: he thought he had for ever lost his friend, and could not, without great difficulty, restrain the effusions of his sorrow—nay, despair. When the surgeons arrived, he awaited their opinion in a state of mind certainly not easily described, and only to be felt by those whose misfortune it has been to be placed under similar circumstances.

“ This young man is most dreadfully mangled,” said they, “ but his wounds

are not mortal, and the weakness which so greatly alarms you is occasioned by his loss of blood. With regard to his antagonist, nothing very favourable can be said, and indeed it is impossible to judge definitively of either of them, until after their wounds have been dressed."

De Courcy recommended Rosinval to the care of the people of the house, and gave orders to have his relations informed of his present dangerous situation: he then returned to his unfortunate friend. When alone with him, the chevalier examined his pale and disfigured face, and tears escaped from his eyes when he thought of Julia. "Oh! thou whom I shall adore until my latest breath," said he, in a

low voice, kneeling by the bed of his unconscious friend, “ lovely and unfortunate woman, I here swear never to leave the deplorable object of thy affection until I have seen him restored to health, and to the sentiment he ought never to have ceased experiencing for thee ! ”

De Courcy, apprehensive that Rosinval’s wound might be mortal, became extremely uneasy about his friend, whom he knew the relations of the former would pursue with the utmost rigour, should he die, in consequence of their meeting. He, therefore, instantly determined to solicit the king’s pardon for the count ; to obtain which he wrote to one of the ministers, who honoured him with his peculiar pro-

tection, explaining all the particulars of this unfortunate event. He thought that his patron, whose justice and integrity were equalled by his benevolence and feeling, would extenuate De Montmorency's rashness, when he reflected on Rosinval's unexampled villainy, and represent the affair in such a point of view to the monarch as would obtain at all events a mitigation of the severe law that then existed in all its force against duellists.

In some measure relieved by writing this letter, De Courcy awaited the first dressing of his wounds before he suffered himself to indulge in the slightest hope, but the prediction of the surgeons was on the next day fulfilled—De Montmorency was declared out of

danger, whilst Rosinval's situation became each moment more critical: his pains were sometimes so excruciating as to extort from him the most horrid imprecations and screams; and at those moments, when exhausted nature had no longer the power of complaining, a wild and savage expression dwelt on his countenance, and his convulsed features shewed the tortures of his mind and body. The mere name of De Montmorency, uttered in his presence, threw him into a situation little short of insanity, and for several hours afterwards deprived him of all consciousness of his existence.

Eight days thus elapsed without his experiencing the least relief to his sufferings, and during that interval De

Montmorency was sufficiently recovered to be removed to his own house; but weak, languid, and absorbed in melancholy, he only replied to his friend's condoling expressions by sighs and tears. "Let me die," said he, one day; "if you really regard me, allow me to die! Of what use is an existence which must for ever be im-bittered by never ceasing remorse!"

Greatly alarmed at the calm and thoughtful manner in which De Montmorency had expressed himself, De Courcy eagerly hastened to re-animate his spirits: he, with the eloquence of sentiment, spoke of the dreadful misery that Julia would experience, if she was to lose her husband, without having enjoyed the consolation of be-

ing restored to his affection. "Oh, my dear Frederic," said he, greatly affected, "what a perspective of happiness is now before you, if you are not determined to reject the hope of felicity!"

"Can I flatter myself," said the count, with a fixed gloom on his countenance, "that the being I have so cruelly injured will ever be convinced of the sincerity of my contrition? Ah! no, no, that is quite impossible."

De Courcy used every argument that friendship could suggest to overcome the count's dejection, and to sooth that indefinite alarm, created by the conviction of an error, which self-love no longer tries to palliate the extent of. De Montmorency had attained

that crisis of the passions; when, adopting only extremes, we frequently mistake misanthropy for wisdom, and disgust for reason. The most ridiculous plans, the most impossible to realise, alone pleased his imagination : he spoke of nothing but the delights of retirement, and the happiness of solitude ; determined to seclude himself from society, and whilst indulging in these humours would not listen to the remonstrances of his friend. De Courcy had too much sense to make use of his strength in so unequal a contest—employing only gentleness, he tried to persuade, not vanquish : his affectionate attention, and unvarying affability, the address with which he brought out De Montmorency's remaining powers,

insensibly produced the wished-for effect, and Julia's guilty husband at length began to feel it not altogether impossible for him to repair his errors. As his physical powers regained their energy, the dismal clouds with which apprehension had darkened the perspective of happiness dispersed, and soon his mind also was restored to its usual tone and vigour.

“ Dear Albert !” said he : “ oh, my worthy and invaluable friend—you, whom I injured and insulted by my unjust suspicions, may your indulgence be imitated by the equally wronged Julia ! But will she—can she ever forgive me ? Shall I ever again see in her lovely face that expression of tender regard which heretofore constituted

my happiness. Alas ! will that blessed time ever return to embellish my now miserable existence ! Dear friend," he adding, sighing, " shall I own to you that my heart repulses the hope with a sentiment so impossible to describe, that I begin to fear I am not now so sensible as I once was to the delight of loving and being loved ; but no matter--entirely devoted to the rigid performance of my duties, Julia shall ever find in me a friend, a sincere and repentant friend, if she will but deign to receive my promise of atoning, during my future life, for my past follies."

The chevalier, greatly affected, pressed De Montmorency to his heart : he could not at first articulate one word, but soon a soothing and consoling con-

viction succeeded to the generous oblivion of his own sensations. If the idea, that he could not love Julia without being culpable, drew sighs from his bosom, the consciousness of having contributed to restore to her the heart of her husband, reinstated him in his own esteem, and fixing a calm and satisfied look on De Montmorency, he congratulated him on his present sentiments, from which he assured him must inevitably result happiness.

The count and his friend now discussed the plan that ought to be pursued; and De Courcy, after having renewed the promise he had before given to make the arrangement of De Montmorency's affairs his exclusive occupation, he, on the next day, began

his negotiations with the creditors.

During this interval, Julia, familiarized with her retreat, each day found in it new delights. Capable of reflecting, she consulted her recollections, meditated on them, and it was always with a sensation of fear that she viewed the possibility of re-entering that world, in which she had met with only mortification and sorrow. The estate of Font Romeu was in the neighbourhood of several castles, inhabited by families whose society might have withdrawn her mind from her affliction; but she never would form the slightest connexion which could detach her from the plan of life she had adopted. She made anxious inquiries

relative to Madame de Florange, and was informed that this respectable woman had died at Paris ten months after the dreadful event which had deprived her of Henry. Her other two sons inhabited the Castle of Florange, the eldest of whom had recently married a rich heiress of the vicinity. These particulars reminded Julia of her friend's misfortunes, and encreased her desire of being alone: solitude regenerated her discouraged soul, and a regular life, gentle and agreeable occupations, had succeeded that agitation, and necessity for diversion, which always wearied her spirits, without procuring her one single moment of comfort.

Her daughter's education was the

object of her particular care and solicitude. Scarcely in the dawn of life the mind of this lovely child unfolded such exquisite sensibility, that the alarmed mother fancied she already saw this innocent creature a victim to the sentiment which had destroyed the life of her unfortunate aunt: she had the same features, the same smile; the large, expressive blue eyes of Henry's beloved, animated her countenance, and whenever she fixed them on Julia, a crowd of harrowing reflections oppressed her soul.

Isabella so passionately loved her mother, that she never left her a single moment: she was always near her, accompanied Julia in her solitary walks, and preferred a long and fatiguing

ramble with her adored mamma to the pleasures of partaking in the amusements of Ximeo's children.

One evening, Julia more than usually melancholy, and full of thought, directed her steps, as was her daily custom, towards Isabella's grave: it was near the end of April. To the calm freshness of a fine spring evening was added the balsamic perfume of the sweet-scented clymatis, and other wild flowers suspended in the apertures of the rocks, kissing the green turf, and mingling their beauty and fragrance with the modest primrose, violet, and daisy, strewed over this smooth and rich carpet.

Julia, absorbed in reflection, walked for a long time slowly under the cy-

press trees, whilst the little Isabella amused herself in gathering tufts of violets, which she immediately pulled to pieces, and scattered around her mother. The setting sun gilded the foliage of the weeping willows, which inclined their flexible branches over the marble tomb, and partly concealed the words engraved on its surface. Never had Julia experienced such oppressive sadness: her eyes bent towards the earth—she occasionally stopped, the better to collect her thoughts—a chain of painful ideas, arising out of the melancholy objects before her, caused her tears to flow: she thought the plaintive manes of her ill-fated friend hovered around her, and an irresistible impulse attaching her to this

illusion, she again stopped, and cast around her looks in which were expressed both tenderness and alarm. A dismal cloud now rendered it almost dark under the trees which surrounded the tomb, but a few rays from the sun passing through the delicate foliage, rested on the auburn hair of the little girl, who had fallen asleep at the foot of the funeral monument. She still held some of the flowers she had gathered—the rest were loose on her lap, falling towards the ground. Julia for some moments admired the celestial calm, of which the sleep of infancy is the most perfect image: but her apprehension that the dampness of the grass might be injurious to the health of her beloved child, made her hastily

advance to take her in her arms, when a herdsman, who was watching his flock on the side of the mountain, played the same favourite provincial air on his pipe which the unfortunate Isabella had sang on the day of her death. Julia unconsciously stopt, and attentively listened to a tune which once encreased her melancholy reflections. The almost total darkness, the distant sound of an instrument, at all times sweetly pathetic..the hour..place..and her state of mind..all combined to render the moment peculiarly awful; and Julia, yielding to her emotions, exclaimed: "Isabella! oh, my dear Isabella! I envy thee thy eternal sleep!" As she uttered these words, she heard a rustling noise among

the branches of the trees, and looking up, observed a man concealed behind them.

To scream loudly, fly to her child, and take her to her bosom, was but the act of a moment. A thousand frightful ideas crowding into Julia's imagination took from her the power of supporting the precious burthen. Little Isabella awoke, looked around her with surprise, then quickly slipping to the ground, exclaimed, running behind the tomb, "Papa! my dear papa!" Julia turned her head, and perceived De Montmorency. A death-like paleness overspread her face, and she with trembling limbs leaned against the marble monument, under which rested her friend.

“ I am hateful to you,” said De Montmorency with the greatest agitation. “ I expected it would be so ; and I have no right to complain.”

“ Papa, dear papa, speak to me,” said little Isabella, covering her father’s hands with kisses.

The count pressed his daughter to his heart, then placing her on the ground, stood like the image of despair.

Julia was motionless : her eyes were fixed on De Montmorency ; but she could not articulate a word. She believed herself in a dream, and dreaded moving, lest the existing scene should vanish.

“ Do not fear,” sorrowfully resumed De Montmorency, “ that I shall by my presence any longer insult her whom I have already so greatly in-

jured. I am going, madam—going for ever. A delusive hope brought me to you ; and if I have too readily yielded to that hope (the only one that could reconcile me to life), you must pardon me.”

Julia breathed a very deep sigh, and took hold of her husband's arm ; then turning aside her head, she, in a voice scarcely intelligible, said :

“ De Montmorency, is it you ? Is it indeed Frederic whom I hear ? Am I not again the dupe to a treacherous illusion ? ”

“ Oh ! my Julia ! ” exclaimed the count, taking his wife in his arms.—
“ Rather tell me, if the words you have just uttered are dictated by your heart. Is that heart still mine ? But it is at your feet I ought to learn my

fate," he added, kneeling, and pressing Julia's hand. "Speak, my love, to your unworthy husband, whose entire life cannot expiate the follies which have so cruelly embittered your's. Tell me you believe me repentant: say you will forgive me."

"De Montmorency," said Julia, greatly affected, "four years a stranger to happiness, allow me to familiarise myself to the unexpected delight caused by the return of your affection."

They again threw themselves into each others arms, then, followed by their child, they pensively, and in silence, walked towards the castle.

A species of restraint and embarrassment, which they mutually felt, and neither could control, succeeded to the ecstacy of so affecting a reconciliation.

De Montmorency feared that a transient sentiment of compassion had alone dictated the pardon he had just received : and Julia, recollecting her husband's unfeeling conduct towards herself, thought his present visit might possibly be produced by a temporary sensation of disgust to the world and its pleasures. In short, neither of them experienced that warm emotion, that indescribable charm, with which their hearts overflowed during the first months of their union.

After crossing the park, they arrived in front of the castle ; but as the hall was filled with the scaffolding of several workmen who were repairing the inner walls, that way into the interior of the building was obstructed. They were obliged to pass through the chapel.

Julia, leaning on Montmorency's arm, and holding her little girl's hand, entered this solemn place, now enveloped in absolute darkness. A few rays from the moon, which had just risen, penetrated through the casements, and spread a pale and uncertain light over the sanctuary where Frederic and Julia had sworn to live for each other. De Montmorency stopped, and convulsive sighs burst from his bosom. He pressed his wife to his heart; then leading her to the foot of the altar, he bent his knee, and exclaimed in a voice which the excess of his emotion rendered scarcely distinct:—"It is here thy guilty husband pronounced the oath to render thee happy: and here, his heart agonized with remorse, he again promises, before that God who

will avenge perjury, to devote the remainder of his life to the expiation of his errors and his crimes. Oh! my Julia, confirm the generous pardon my despair extracted from you, and on this sacred spot tell me if your heart still feels that sentiment of affection which once constituted our felicity."

Dearest Frederic," replied Julia, greatly affected, "do not speak of expiation. This blessed moment recompenses me for all I have suffered. You are not the only guilty one: I, also, require your indulgence, to efface the recollection of errors, which I have experienced the fatal consequences of. We will both endeavour to forget all—but that we love, and live for each other."

De Montmorency was going to reply, when little Isabella, terrified at the darkness of the place where she

had been left by Julia, uttered a piercing shriek. Her father flew to her, took her in his arms, and, followed by Julia, left the ~~castle~~ *chapel*

When they reached the parlour, where the lighted candles allowed them to more attentively examine each other, widely different sensations drew exclamations from the count and countess. Julia, alarmed at her husband's excessive paleness, overwhelmed him with questions, as to the cause of so remarkable a change; whilst De Montmorency, admiring the beautiful bloom which a calm and sedentary life had brought back to Julia's expressive face, felt astonished that he had ever preferred the false allurements of metreticious beauty, to the natural charms of so lovely a woman.

The count anxiously wished to avoid answering the questions she so earnestly asked ; but, finding it impossible to elude them, he at length yielded to her entreaties, and gave her a circumstantial account of the incidents which had occurred at Paris since her departure for Font Romeu.

Julia could not without shuddering hear of the dangers which De Montmorency had escaped ; and the necessity for concealing her antipathy to Rosinval no longer existing, she unreservedly expressed her sentiments of him.

“ He is become an object of universal contempt,” continued De Montmorency : “ my affair with him has made a great noise in the world ; and society in general reprobate him as a monster

of iniquity ; besides, I do not think he will ever again leave his room, for his wounds are so extremely painful that he cannot endure the slightest motion without the most excruciating torture ; and indeed the surgeons are apprehensive that he will at last become the victim to his own villainy."

After admiring the justice of heaven, which sooner or later punishes iniquity, Julia ventured delicately to put a few questions relative to De Montmorency's pecuniary affairs: he replied to them with the same candour ; and it was at his wife's feet he informed her how the generous sacrifice she had made for him had reached his knowledge.

" Yes, my beloved," he added, manly tears rolling over his pallid

cheeks, " I learnt that at the moment when I so unfeelingly and cruelly banished you, you had, to relieve me, stripped yourself of all that you possessed in the world. Oh, God ! can I ever be forgiven ! No, no, for I can never pardon myself ! "

Julia placed one of her hands on her husband's lips to prevent him from continuing. He covered the lovely hand with kisses, and trying to overcome his emotion, he finished the recital he had began.

De Courcy's noble and disinterested conduct, his zeal and activity, his kindness in saving De Montmorency from the unpleasant necessity of arranging with his creditors, greatly affected Julia, and she praised the inestimable friend with an affectionate warmth

which her husband sincerely approved. The Count and Countess de Montmorency continued calmly to converse on the plan of life most proper to be adopted: and it was determined that they should remain at Font Romeu until the count's estate was cleared of all the mortgages with which it was at present encumbered, and which, with a strict adherence to the most rigid economy, might be accomplished in about four years.

“There is no need of that motive to induce me to cherish solitude,” exclaimed De Montmorency.

“The treasure which I now possess will render this retirement a thousand times preferable to the empty splendor, from which I never experienced any gratification, but on the contrary numberless anxieties, and almost destruction.”

'Two months after the count's arrival at Font Romeu, he received a letter from De Courcy. "The affairs I undertook to manage," said he, "are at length arranged to my entire satisfaction. Rosinval has no longer any claim upon you. In one week I begin my journey to Malta, where I shall take those vows which may perhaps restore my lost tranquillity. Continue, dearest friend, to enjoy a blessing, the value of which you must now be sensible of, and above all, carefully guard yourself against that dreadful disposition to jealousy, which has occasioned so much misery."

The chevalier did not mention Julia in his letter, which he concluded by informing De Montmorency of an event, that once more caused Julia to reflect on the never failing justice of heaven.

Mad. de Seligny had lost her daughter. Louisa, after giving birth to an unfortunate little object, died on the third day of her confinement: her mother appeared inconsolable, the more so, as there was but little hope that her illustrious grandson would many days survive her who had brought him into the world.

“ And this is the result,” said Julia, “ of my unfeeling aunt’s ambitious projects! Poor Louisa! neither thy riches, nor the honours by which thou wert surrounded, could save thee from a premature death. And didst thou live happily? I doubt it!” she added sorrowfully: “ there is no such thing as happiness; and yet we all foolishly determine to pursue its fugitive shadow.” A sigh from De Montmorency

answered this philosophical reflection. Julia raised her eyes, looked at him, and was struck by the peculiar expression of gravity depicted on his countenance. She had long wished to open her heart to him, and could not resist the impulse which propelled her now to speak to him with candour.

“Dearest friend!” said she, “I see that you regret the sentiment which once constituted our felicity. I too for a long while shared in this regret, but we are both recovered from a transitory passion, which we mistook for love: let us acknowledge our error, and endeavour to be steadily, and really happy. When first you took me from misery, and placed me in your bosom, you thought me a superior being.—The distinction with which

you honoured me flattered my vanity, dazzled my understanding, and I thought you a deity: but, dearest Frederic," she added smiling, "subsequent events have convinced us both that we are mere mortals, liable to all the errors and frailties of human nature, and if our affection for each other is less ardent than at the period I refer to, it is more rational, and will be more permanent; for is not your wife now your friend? Alas! yes, your sincere and affectionate friend!"

De Montmorency threw himself into Julia's arms, and mingled his tears with those which real attachment and sensibility caused to flow from Julia's lovely eyes: their sensations were melancholy but consoling, and the count, pressing her fondly to his heart, ex-

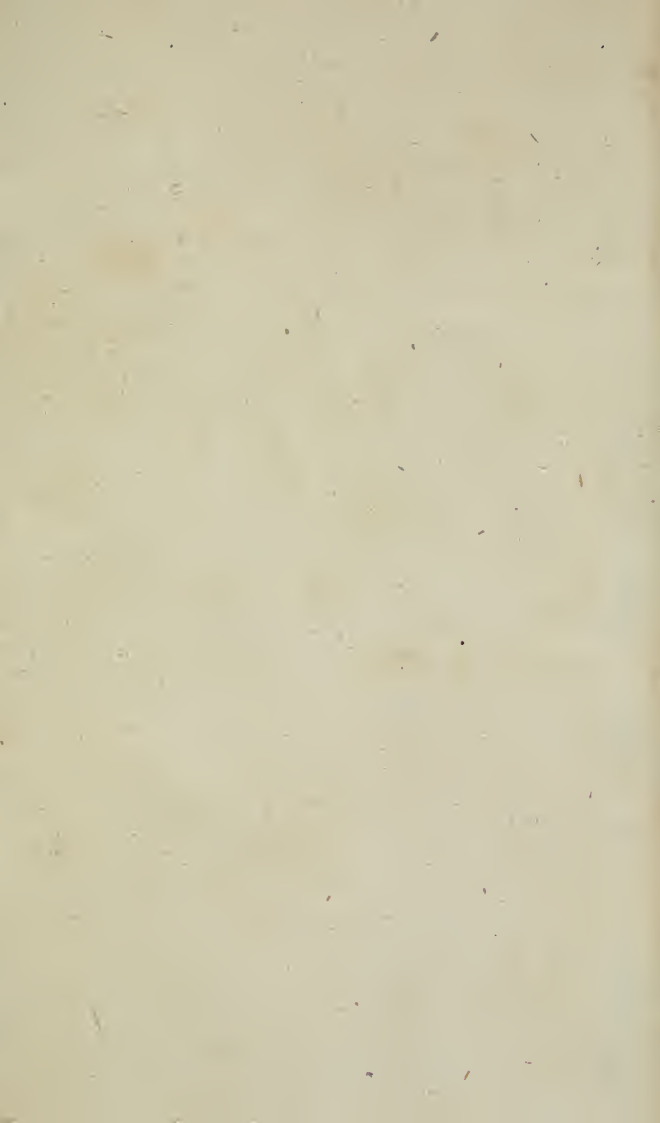
claimed, "Yes ! thou art indeed my beloved friend !"

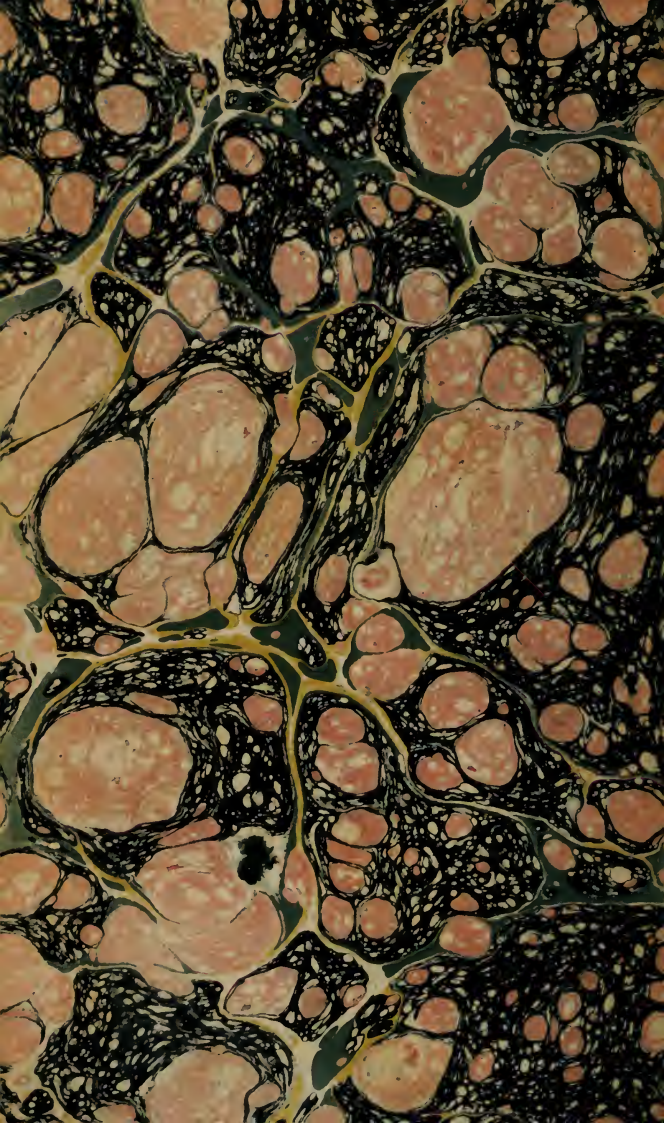
From that hour they were thoroughly reconciled to themselves and each other, and the restraint and embarrassment which until this last conversation had been felt by both, was now entirely vanished. Always together, they tranquilly enjoyed the certainty of being necessary to each others happiness.

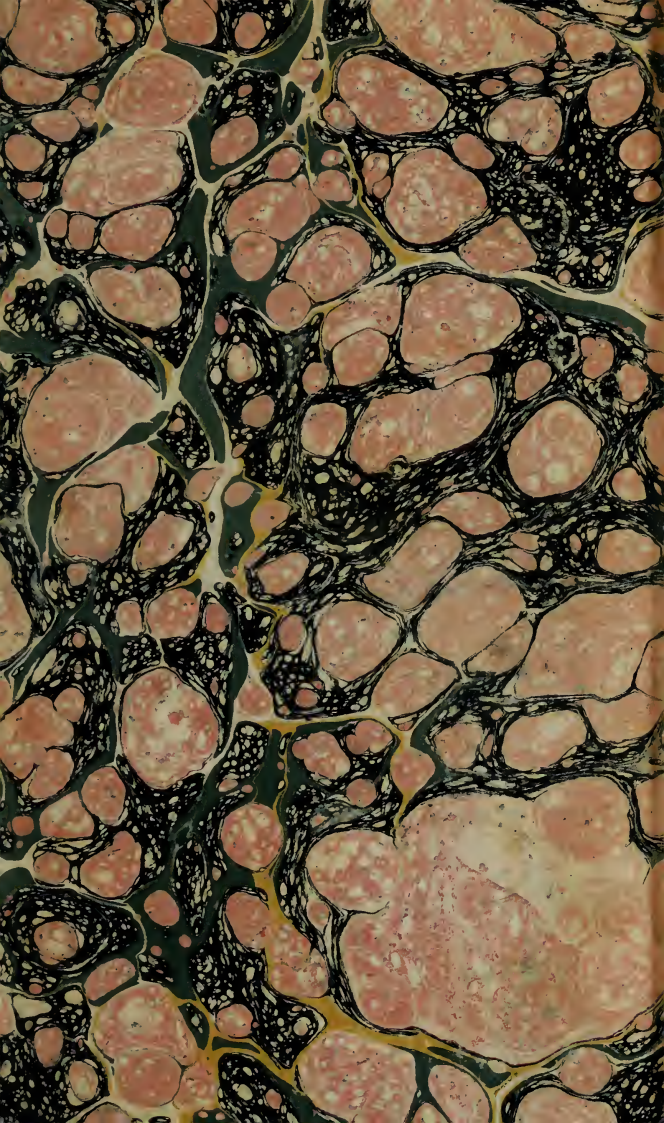
"Frederic," said Julia, affectionately pressing her husband's hand, "my beloved Frederic, if this is still an illusion, may it endure as long as my existence !"

THE END.





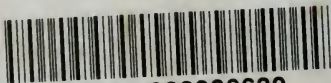




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